development forum

Vol.19-No.6/Vol.20-No.1
November 1991—February 1992

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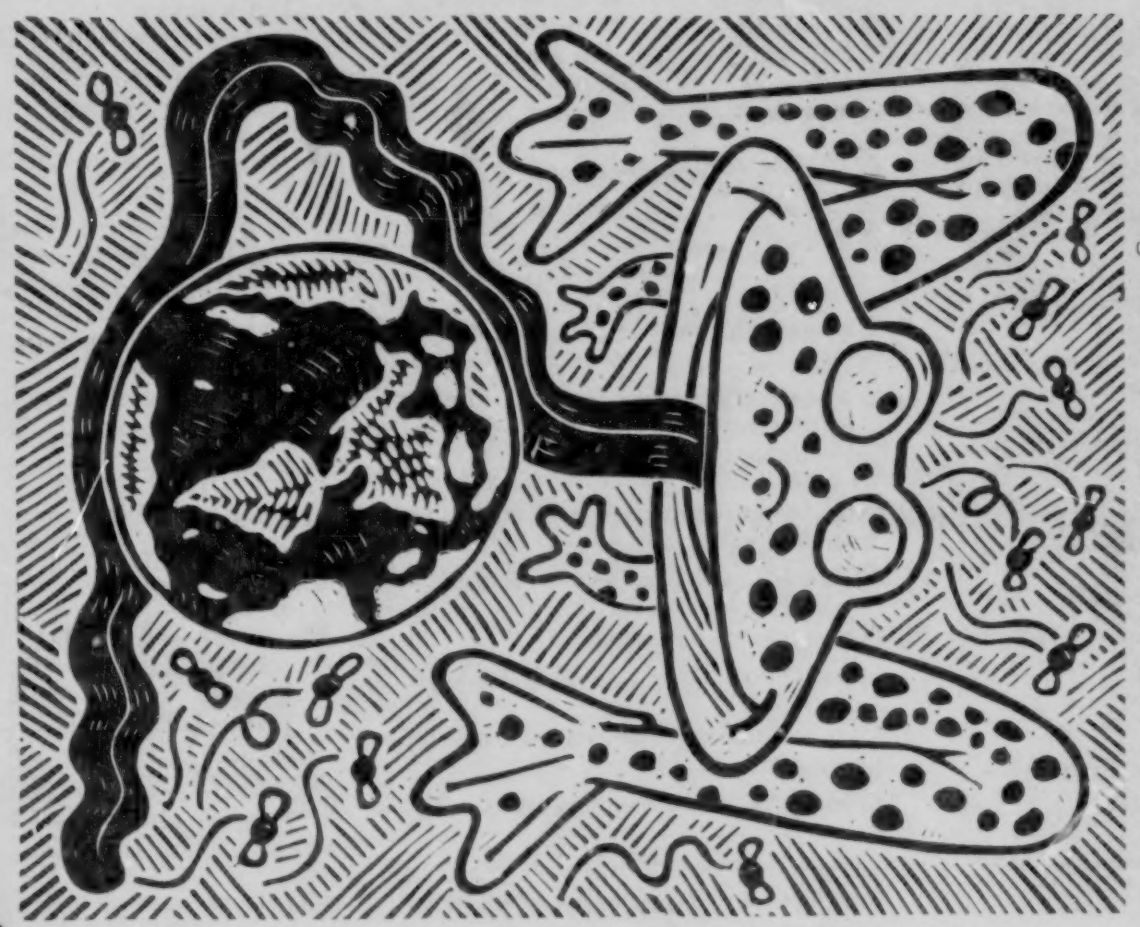
The rocky road to Rio

No one said it would be easy, but the Earth Summit's fast track is looking more like an obstacle course. *[See page 12]*



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Debt crisis persists

Denmark debates foreign aid policy

UNICEF alarmed over Eastern Europe

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In this issue

Development Forum enters its twentieth year just as our new secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali takes office expressing his determination that the United Nations should continue its efforts to bridge the gap between poverty and affluence and to reconcile the issues of environment and sustainable development. The current issue, combining November-December 1991 and January-February 1992, is a special edition containing extended coverage of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, two subjects that this newspaper has helped to bring to the top of the international agenda over the past two decades.

The Earth Summit in Rio and its final preparatory meeting in New York in March and April promise to be among the most important events of 1992. We hope that our expanded coverage, particularly the double-length "Centrespread" feature (pages 13-16), provides an overview of the difficult and complex preparations by the United Nations system and hundreds of officials from governments and non-governmental organizations around the world.

By combining two editions we hope to be in a position to produce another Earth Summit-oriented issue in May-June, with additional press runs for extended distribution immediately before the conference.

Also in this issue, our "Voices for Development" column (page 3) features Shah A.M.S. Kibria, head of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, who warns that the industrial revolution sweeping much of Asia must be accompanied by extensive social improvements if economic progress is to be sustained.

Also, read about *panelitis conferentis*, an insidious condition for which Erskine Childers, veteran United Nations panelist, offers panaceas (page 22).

Once again we urge those readers who have not yet filled out our reader survey (page 27) to return the form and, if they wish, receive our complimentary copy of the United Nations world map as a token of our appreciation. We thank the hundreds of readers who have already provided us with valuable feedback on the publication.

Meanwhile, we also thank the thousands of readers from developed and developing regions alike who have generously supported our new policy of paid subscriptions. Some individuals or organizations have even paid for multiple subscriptions, a model which many others could still follow.

Terence D. Jones, resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme in Bhutan, for example, has paid for annual subscriptions on behalf of 26 educators, development experts and civil servants in need of the information that we provide. Adelaide M. Schlafly, a member of the American Council for the United Nations University in St. Louis, Missouri, sent a cheque to cover her two-year subscription and additional subscriptions for 35 other friends and relatives.

Their support and co-operation will not only help us get through these difficult economic times but, more importantly, it will eventually subsidize the subscriptions of those from the Third World unable to pay and yet find ***Development Forum*** indispensable. As always, we appreciate such gestures of generosity.

H.U.

Third World Debt

United Nations: Debt crisis persists

UN/John Isaac

Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

In his acceptance speech before the General Assembly on 3 December, secretary-general-designate Boutros Boutros-Ghali declared that "tackling the crippling problem of international debt" will be a priority in his efforts to "narrow the gap between the rich North and the poor South", as well as achieving a healthy world economy.

Ghali was voicing the alarm felt throughout much of the United Nations system that, while lenders no longer see the debt as a threat to the international banking system, the $1.3 trillion developing country foreign debt continues to bleed many low- and lower-income countries of their ability to sustain social and economic progress.

For over a decade now, debt payments to the North exceeded most of the poor countries' earning capacity, causing most of the indebted nations to "adjust" by making cuts in food subsidies, education and health spending.

In fact, several United Nations organizations that closely monitor developing country debt have all called for stepped-up negotiations for more aggressive debt reduction and other relief measures. Speaking at the release of the annual World Debt Tables 1991-1992, World Bank chief economist Lawrence Summers said that getting many of these countries out of crisis would "require exceptional measures which go

Continued on page 12

Eastern Europe

UNICEF alarmed over transition

Long accustomed to focusing attention on the needs of developing countries, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is shifting its attention to the abrupt and dramatic changes in Eastern Europe—changes which threaten minimal standards for child nutrition and health care in particular.

UNICEF has advocated that its principle of "First call for children"—meaning that developing nations undergoing economic and social turmoil give priority to their children in the allocation of resources—now be applied to Central and Eastern European nations as well.

The just-published UNICEF study, *The State of the World's Children 1992*, argues that just as developing countries adopted special social policies to cope with the structural problems of deficit-spending, debt and recession, so too the former communist countries must take special steps to cope with the transition to market economies.

In both cases, UNICEF insists that

Continued on page 18

UNICEF-John Chiasson

The breakdown of *the social safety net affects many children, like this Romanian orphan in a state hospital for children in the town of Vulturesti.*

Official Development Assistance

Danes debate foreign aid policy

By Martin Burcharth

Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom—virtually all European countries—are rethinking their foreign aid policies which altogether provide much of the $50 billion in aid flowing from North to South each year. While few question the existence of their aid programmes, many are calling for changes, ranging from measures to encourage democracy, human rights and market reforms in recipient countries, to improved co-ordination through the European Community. In Denmark, the national debate revolves around calls to tie more aid to domestic businesses. More on Nordic country proposals for reforms on page 8.

Although Denmark enjoys the reputation as one of the most generous and conscientious providers of foreign aid to developing countries in the world, domestic pressures may soon substantially alter its official development assistance (ODA) policy. Like many other industrialized countries, a combination of factors, including conservative shifts in government and economic pressures and rethinking of aid policies in general, may possibly lead to redirected ODA flows.

At the centre of the intense ODA debate in Denmark in recent months is the apparent inability of Danish companies to increase their share in development aid projects run primarily by the United Nations and its affiliate organizations. Presently only 30 per cent of Denmark's annual ODA contribution to international organizations is returned in the form of contracts or orders for the Danish business community through bilateral programmes.

Critics of this long-standing policy of aid "untied" to domestic companies argue that this proportion is too small. They hope to reverse the policy under which the government donates close to half of its annual spending on development aid to international or multilateral aid organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

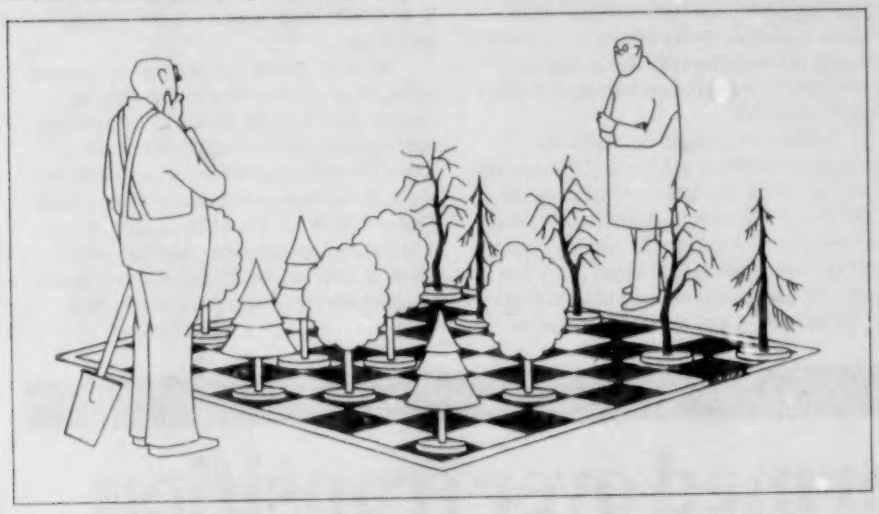
Continued on page 8

Earth Summit must challenge existing paradigms

Dear Editor,

I recently attended the Geneva PrepCom III for the Earth Summit, which brought together about 1,000 delegates representing 100 countries and 200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

For many thinkers, planners, policy makers, scientists, technologists and lay persons, the Rio Earth Summit represents the hopeful beginning of a new era. The governments and the NGOs participating in the PrepCom process, however, have strayed from a unified and total approach to deal with our environmental and development crises.



Many NGOs were drumming the same issues of poverty and its causes as well as the global system of exploitation, while the governments in the three working groups on the Earth Charter, Agenda 21, and institutional and legal framework were dealing with mostly environmental issues.

There was very little attention given to the underdevelopment in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The larger issues of environmental education, the problems of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), global inequities, the roles of multinational corporations, and of environmental and developmental planning were given no significant attention by most of the delegates.

The crises of the exploding population, the role of indigenous peoples in protecting ecology, development of low-cost and low-energy-consuming technologies also were neglected.

We see antiquated methods of dealing with these issues, particularly by NGOs, which are still divided according to their sectoral interests such as women, indigenous peoples, and African, Latin American and Asian development.

Tragically, very few realize that the old paradigms of functioning have no value if we must change the world and reconstruct it according to our goals in the Earth Charter. Asians cannot work in isolation from the rest of the world, women cannot just talk of the same women's issues without men working with them as partners, Latin Americans are not separated as they would have been 75 years ago, and boundaries within which Africans were confined are disappearing fast. The world and its environmental and developmental problems are totally indivisible.

UNCED is an opportunity to engage in the hard tasks of educating ourselves about the crises we face and then taking up actions globally, regionally and locally, wherever we are able, by redesigning our distorted existence.

We are learning from the European example of a united Europe by 1992 that we need to move towards integrated regional environmental and developmental plans (two sides of the same coin) based on human and resource balances. We need eco-regional plans for the whole earth.

But, why wait for June 1992? There is nothing magical about any date or place. If Rio is not an event but a process of reconstruction, an earnest task of dealing with myriads of monumental human and ecological issues confronting the earth, our task begins now and here—for us and for our children in centuries ahead.

Rashmi Mayur,
president, Global Futures Network, 73A Mittal Tower, Nariman Point, Bombay 400 021, India.

Sustainable growth not a slogan

Dear Editor,

Herman E. Daly's crystalline argument ("Sustainable growth is possible only if we forgo growth", *DF*, September-October) against the concept of "sustainable growth" is valid only if its premises are sound. However, it seems that he shares some conservationist misperceptions.

That is, over evolutionary time, the biosphere (Daly's "ecosystem") has demonstrably grown from zero (no life) to its present luxuriance within a so-called closed system. Equally obvious, it can grow still further.

This miracle has been achieved by, first, pressing inanimate physical matter into the service of life. To date, only a small proportion of Earth's matter and energy is employed by life.

Second, among already animate structures, ever higher levels of productivity and sophistication have evolved. Thus in Daly's terms, the biosphere has employed both growth (extension) and development (quality).

These two mechanisms interact, increased sophistication enabling further extension of the biosphere into previously inanimate "territory". Dalyan growth will only end when the whole of Earth is biologically alive. At that point we shall have to be content with only development, but we should be clear that even this can be translated into more wealth.

Humanity is the most sophisticated species on Earth today. We, therefore, have the evolutionary duty to use our sophistication to further enlarge the biosphere. In short, "sustainable growth" is only a thought-stopping slogan if you argue from false premises. Let's get these right first.

Tim Sharp,
P.O. Box 4, Doi Saket, Chiang Mai 50220, Thailand.

Linkage for sustainable development

Dear Editor,

I have been reading *Development Forum* for only a year but I find that the importance and timeliness of the subjects it discusses really answer my needs, and I sincerely congratulate you.

The problem of development is everybody's concern. But, today, two new questions threaten to negate all development efforts: environmental degradation and population growth.

I am very pleased to find in *DF*, on a regular basis and, occasionally, several times in the same issue, articles on demography and the environment. Now I would like to see *Development Forum* make a bridge between education, population, environment and development—that is, give us an analysis showing the role of education in the search for solutions to the problems of population and environment, in the perspective of sustainable development.

Ismaïlou Ibrahim,
teacher at the Lycée technique de Maradi, Maradi, Republic of Niger.

Old reliable

Dear Editor,

I thought I would write to tell you how much I rely on *Development Forum* in my teaching and development work, and always use it in preparing my classes, monographs, research and conferences. My colleagues also love the publication and depend on it for international development news. All my colleagues, students and fellow researchers hope that you will continue to publish, and we are all impatiently awaiting the next issue.

Adama Mamadou Kone,
teacher, 03 B.P. 526, Bouaké 03, Côte d'Ivoire.

Technological ingenuity

Dear Editor,

I was absolutely delighted to read about the development of the system of generating electricity ("Four-legged electric generator", *DF*, May-June). Perhaps it should be clarified that this system has existed for centuries; it's called *noria* or *sakieh* in Arabic. Farmers still use it today to draw deep water to the surface to irrigate their fields.

What amazes me is the ingenuity of those who tried to use this "antiquated" system to produce electrical current. It confirms one of my convictions: (almost) everything is possible, but in general, humanity prefers to remain blind rather than to make the necessary effort which concrete progress demands.

My compliments also to *DF* for its new layout and for all the information you provide to your readers.

Claudia Merazzi,
13 rue des Oeillets, 2502 Biel/Bienne, Switzerland.

Relieving the book famine

Dear Editor,

Africa's book shortage ("Africa's other famine: A hunger for books" by Kofi Ahinful, *DF*, September-October) is a matter that the Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE) has been addressing for 30 years, through the shipping of donated North American books and through support for autonomous publishing.

We were interested, therefore, to read your correspondent's report on the situation in Ghana, which is indeed symptomatic of most African countries.

One of our most exciting projects is designed to encourage the development of the publishing industry in Tanzania. CODE agrees to purchase a set number of locally-written and illustrated children's books from independent publishers. We distribute the books to rural schools and libraries while the publisher sells his share on the retail market.

In Mozambique, meanwhile, CODE is supplying books in Portuguese to the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

CODE/Daniel Perrot

And in Zimbabwe and several other African countries, CODE is providing funding, training support, supplies and paper for magazines and rural newspapers, both of which can play an integral role in the development process.

These initiatives, combined with our traditional book-sending function, represent significant steps in our mandate to support a sustainable literate environment.

Robert Dyck,
national director, CODE/OCED, National Office, 321 Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7Z2.

More letters on page 27

Asia now confronts social lag

By Shah A.M.S. Kibria

Three decades of dynamic economic growth in several countries and economies in East and South-East Asia have caught the attention of the world, fostering no small amount of admiration and, perhaps, concern in certain quarters. However, the economic transformation that has been sweeping through Asia has outpaced social advances to a dangerous degree. Governments are now coming to recognize that major steps to foster social development must be taken to ensure the long-term stability of their nations.

ESCAP

This remarkable economic transformation is nothing less than an industrial revolution taking place throughout all of Asia in varying degrees. What started in Japan has spread through much of East Asia and is now transforming South-East Asia. Inevitably, it is affecting South Asian countries as well, reaching a plateau sometime in the first half of the twenty-first century.

At the same time, social unrest is spreading despite economic growth often exceeding 8 per cent annually. The social problems in these countries are as dangerous as the social and political problems in other Asian countries where economic stagnation also prevents people from realizing heightened expectations.

Industrialization has accelerated the unplanned growth of urban areas, usually accompanied by dangerous environmental pollution. By the year 2000, 15 Asian cities will have populations over 10 million. In some of these cities, up to 40 per cent of the people already live in squatter settlements.

Similarly, in our rural areas, traditional societies are being dislocated by change, often violently.

Pressures are building throughout the region, which is home to 54 per cent of the world's population with only 35 per cent of its land area. Environmental problems such as deforestation and the negative side effects of the Green Revolution have made rural inhabitants more vulnerable than before.

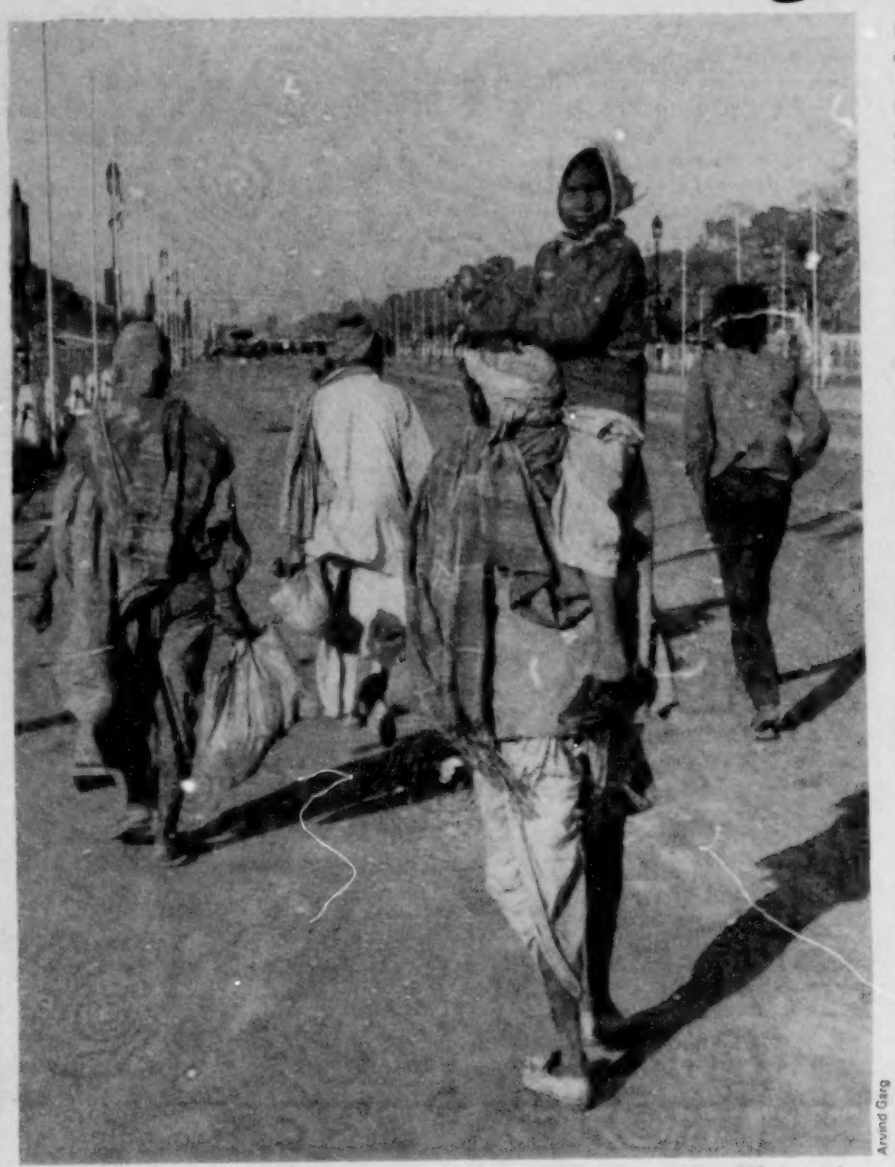
Most Asian societies are dominated by ancient male-oriented traditions, which are slow to change. Women suffer major disadvantages—fewer rights, lower wages, higher illiteracy and, unlike the trend in the rest of the world, lower life expectancy than men in many countries. This cannot continue.

The social transformation of Asia's largely agrarian societies is increasingly seen as both inevitable and necessary. Inevitable because it reflects the impact of increasingly complex economies and new production techniques that deeply affect people's lives—where they live and work, their income and education levels, the size of their families and their state of health. Necessary because the economic forces that are emerging require a skilled, healthy, educated workforce matched by a more equitable distribution of wealth to sustain further growth.

Asian governments from Afghanistan to the Philippines are increasingly aware of the dangers inherent in economies that outpace social changes. This growing sensitivity to the social needs in the region has fueled efforts by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to develop a plan of action to address the social shortcomings on a regional basis. Governments recognize, for example, that cheap labour is no longer the key to attracting new investment. We need to upgrade human resources within the labour force. Developing the necessary skills will require a whole range of changes at all levels of society.

In its function to facilitate dialogues on these questions, ESCAP has

Continued on page 4



Arvind Garg

Don't look back: *Asian peasants are pouring into urban areas as the quality of life in rural areas is neglected.*

Voices for Development

The Bangkok-based United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) recently proposed dramatic measures to address the growing social problems in the region. ESCAP executive secretary Shah A.M.S. Kibria explains why governments are so responsive.

Sri Lankan writer J. Leonard Peires argues that the spreading industrial revolution is alienating Asia's huge farming population, dangerously undermining a key to sustainable development in the future.

Industry versus agriculture: Collision course in Asia

By J. Leonard Peires

For centuries, agriculture-based rural Asian societies have been the backbone of the region's civilizations. In recent decades, however, a rapid process of modernization has seen the emergence of new values which place greater importance on industrialization and urban populations. Today, in many countries, this new situation is reflected in government priorities, programmes and budgets at all levels.

This shift has hastened the breakdown of the rural character of societies by supplanting the human relations within them with consumerism and a preoccupation with the market-place. Human rights and distributive justice are receding into the background, and the profit motive is becoming the dominant impulse.

Agriculture and its production process have been part of the art, culture and creativity of Asian farmers. Generation after generation, rural communities have maintained their autonomy and independence through the crops they produce, the seeds and other inputs they use, and a portion of the products they sell or exchange. All these processes used to be under the individual family's control.

Independence lost

Modernization in agriculture is taking away farmers' independence. Agro-business and corporations now dictate terms as to what farmers should produce and the kind of fertilizers and pesticides they should use. Finally, the products must be sold at the price fixed by the companies. Farmers have been reduced to do contract labour even when they possess the land.

The imposition of industrial disciplines on basically rural economies have created a structural contradiction which is causing social and economic destabilization in many Asian countries. The industrialization sweeping Asia has inhibited peoples' capacity to think out their problems, making them individualistic and disinclined to accept responsibility, leading to increased dependence on external forces. Stripped of their independence, they easily succumb to increasing pressures with anti-social acts like denuding forests, polluting the atmosphere and degrading life at all levels.

Industrialization is unnecessarily destabilizing traditional rural structures throughout Asia.

Today the majority of the people of these countries are losing, if they have not already lost, the sense of belonging or commitment to their land. They have become aliens in their own land, pressured to be content to be buyers of goods and services. The growing majority of these people are landless sharecroppers and squatters on unproductive land who, for the greater part of the year, are compelled to hire their labour for low wages.

Which model?

Two processes are in play and the people and the governments of Asia must decide, and decide soon, which path they will choose to define the future of rural life.

The new model fosters a form of monoculture which shapes people to suit a philosophy of all-inclusive production by select cartels, and designed and engineered by technocrats.

An alternative would be based on

Continued on page 4

Social lag in Asia

Continued from page 3

found remarkable agreement among government officials regarding a broad set of principles on the basis of which the fourth Asian and Pacific Conference on Social Welfare and Social Development, organized by ESCAP in Manila last October, adopted a regional social development strategy towards the year 2000 and beyond as well as the Manila Declaration. Experience has repeatedly demonstrated that development is not successful unless people are involved. The Strategy and the Plan of Action seek to enlist the cooperation and support of the masses in particular.

Governments understand that it is necessary to promote policies that redistribute wealth, foster self-reliance, popular participation in communal decision-making and democratic involvement at all levels. There should be well-funded programmes directed at poverty, especially the intractable poverty from which people in many areas of Asia have suffered for centuries.

Governments are moving to build a framework of legislation to address social problems. There is recognition that drastic measures are needed to protect the deteriorating environment: enforce laws to protect water supplies, control logging operations, stimulate sustainable agriculture and slow down pollution.

Legislation is required to improve the status of women in all areas, especially in those of health, literacy and access to the labour market. Ultimately these steps will reduce population growth.

Unless there is a targeted programme directed at impoverished areas, the deep poverty will not go away despite the most sophisticated advances achieved by other sectors of society. Officials understand that a test of a government's success is in its allocation of resources. Funds must be redirected to health, housing and education, and a positive climate of public opinion fostered to see that funds are well used and that legislation finds popular support.

ESCAP's role in this process is that of a catalyst, one of advocacy, supporting its recommendations with research, data and technical assistance. We recognize that these social matters, while having much in common, are inherently national and influenced by the ethnic, religious, political and economic realities of each nation. Yet our common ground is extensive and our collective experience and actions can build healthier societies so that by the year 2030, the current revolution will have led to a peaceful transformation where harmony and progress are shared by all sectors of society. ■

Shah A.M.S. Kibria is an under-secretary-general of the United Nations and executive secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

SOURCE: ESCAP

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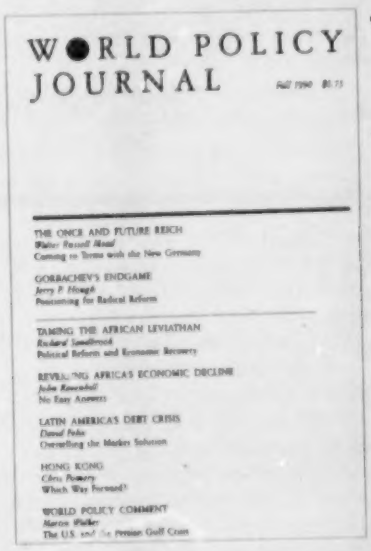

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Industry vs. agriculture

Continued from page 3

the model of sustainable agriculture which recognizes the diversity of people, places and needs, and offers farmers the option to make their own choices, to take their own safeguards against being used as a consumer, to become a producer in their own right and to exercise the right to self-determination.

Today it is very much in doubt whether farmers can envisage a return to the science of cultivation used by their ancestors. In fact, they may not foresee, and may even refuse to recognize, the possibility that science and technology can subvert their efforts. This could be the main obstacle to a return to sanity and self-reliance on their part.

As the traditional ethics of the farmer-based community are eroded, the indigenous farmer loses his place in the community because his native skills increasingly go idle. For the farmer was knowledgeable not only in the physics of organic cultivation but its metaphysics too, as when his cultivation programmes were timed to suit lunar changes and the tides.

Equally, his knowledge of plants and their uses, of food habits and food needs should give the lie to the artificial nutritional programmes which are projected for human consumption. The traditional farmer has much to reveal to us about the workings within the symbolic order, which is the order which sustains life. He must be offered the opportunity to do so.

Sustainable agriculture is what our ancestors may have practiced; but the small farmer and peasant cultivator of the twentieth century and beyond cannot be expected to do only what their ancestors did. They live in a technological society; they will want to use technology but must be equipped to countermand technological domination and improve organic methods of cultivation. Sustainable agriculture should help develop this knowledge scientifically so that they can boost production and increase their self-sufficiency. If the Asian farmer continues to lose the ability to produce his own food on his own terms, the disintegration of rural society will accelerate with disastrous consequences for the future of the region. ■

J. Leonard Peires works with the National Rural Conference, Sri Lanka, a non-governmental organization.

Building a river across Libya

By Allan Thompson

Officially, it is called the Great Manmade River, though it is not a river at all, but a pipeline designed to carry billions of cubic metres of fresh water from beneath Libya's southern sands north to the Mediterranean coast. Some Libyans prefer to refer to the $25 billion project as the Eighth Wonder of the World.

It will be, indeed, spectacular. As long as the oil money does not run out, work will continue well into the next century towards the ambitious goal of food self-sufficiency for this country of 3.7 million people. Simply put, the plan involves

The 2,000 kilometre pipeline promises to make the coastal desert bloom.

tapping into the estimated 35,000-cubic-kilometre reserves of fresh water trapped in limestone caverns beneath the desert, pumping the water to the surface and transporting it to the coast.

The water, more than 80 per cent of which is intended for agriculture, will make the nine-day trip north mostly by gravity, with massive reservoirs to keep the pressure up and numerous pumping stations to boost it along.

Work on the project, which has been overseen by the Korean construction giant Dong Ah since 1983, represents one of the biggest civil engineering undertakings of the century. It has involved drilling hundreds of water wells, assembling specialized pipe construction plants, building kilometres of roads to transport pipe sections, digging, scraping and sometimes blasting the 1,900 kilometres of seven-metre deep trench in which to lay the pipe, and constructing pumping stations and reservoirs. So far, 250,000 of the 80-ton concrete and wire pipe sections have been laid end-to-end beneath the desert.

Environmentalists were worried that tapping groundwater was a bad thing, but the Libyans said there would be no impact outside the immediate area of the wells. At the outset Egypt also protested that it had claim to some of the water, but after official assurances that the irrigation system would provide jobs for a million Egyptian farm workers in Libya, the protests subsided.

The first phase of the project, which opened in September, will carry two million cubic metres of water daily to the coast through parallel pipelines, one running from wellfields at Tazerbo to Benghazi and the other from Sarir to Sirt.

Brown & Root Limited

As in most *of North Africa and the Middle East, lack of water is Libya's chief environmental problem. The depletion of coastal aquifers in Libya—and the resulting salinization of water tables—is the main reason for the Great Manmade River project. However, there is concern that exhaustion of the southern aquifers could also lead to serious water problems in Sudan and Egypt within the next 50 to 60 years. The irrigation system will either transform Libya's agricultural capacity or be one of the great white elephants of the century.*

Phase two, a separate pipeline from wellfields in East Fezzan to the capital, Tripoli, is being built, again with Dong Ah as contractor. It will take seven years. Phase three would add a further 1.68 million cubic metres of water flow to phase one.

Libyan officials, including Muhammed Ahmed Al-Mankush, head of the Great Manmade River Authority, effectively the man in charge of it all, are reluctant to discuss the project as a whole. But sources familiar with the project say there had been serious problems with the water wells drilled by the Brazilian company Braspetro. Screens around the wells were collapsing and sand and gravel getting into the water supply. Some of the casings had to be refurbished, causing great expense and delay, the sources said.

And while the Libyans still talk about a five-phase project, with later connections to Tobruk in the east and a link-up between phases one and two, the sources said the project has now unofficially been scaled down to three phases. "Since the plans are changing all the time, it is truth by modification," said a senior Western diplomat in Tripoli. "Originally it was five phases and now it is three. There have been continuous delays, mostly because of the enormous amounts of money involved in it."

Some experts charged that for the estimated $5 billion used to build phase one, numerous desalination plants could have been built along the coast to serve the same purpose.

The Libyans refute this. Project documents said: "It is considered that the unit cost of the water delivered by the Great Manmade River project will be significantly less than the comparative cost of desalinated water."

All have to admit the project's successes. Contractor Dong Ah is credited with doing a superb job under trying working conditions. At Brega and Sarir, Dong Ah built state-of-the-art pipe plants in the middle of the desert to produce the massive pipeline sections.

Inside the guarded gates of the Brega plant, construction crews—mostly Korean and Thai—work round-the-clock shifts with amazing efficiency, producing 80-ton pipe sections with a metal and concrete core, coiled with pre-stressed wire, and coated with mortar.

Along the pipeline that heads off in two directions from Ajdabya—east to Benghazi and west to Sirt—there will be turnouts to supply local communities and farm projects. Priority crops will be wheat, barley, sorghum and sheep fodder, to reduce costly imports of foodstuffs.

Early writers record that much of North Africa was a savannah and there are ruins of inland cities and traces of dried-up lakes in the Fezzan and marshes at Kufra 1,700 years ago.

At the present rate, the Libyan dream to be green once again appears to have a real chance at coming true. ■

Allan Thompson, a Canadian journalist with the Toronto Star *newspaper, is currently on a one-year Gemini News Service internship sponsored by Canada's International Development Research Centre.*

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Tanzania

Seaweed farming on the ropes

In recent years, fishermen in the Philippines have turned from fishing to seaweed cultivation (See *DF*, May-June 1991). Now a coastal community in Tanzania following the Filipino example has demonstrated that it is a good crop in Africa as well.

Two companies have set up business in Zanzibar, the island just off the Tanzanian coast in the Indian Ocean. One company is actually farming seaweed itself and employing local people. The other is encouraging people to grow the seaweed for sale to the company which processes it for an extract called carageenan, a binding agent in food products.

The technology is relatively simple. Nylon ropes are anchored to the seashore, and small pieces of seaweed are tied to them. After six weeks of continual immersion in seawater, the seaweed is ready for harvesting. Most of it is cut off, dried in the sun for a few days and then sold to the company. The pieces remaining on the rope then begin to grow again.

The project began by using local varieties of seaweed. As they did not grow very quickly, the company brought the Filipino variety to Zanzibar. This variety seems to be growing better than it did in the Philippines. More suitable sites are currently being sought on the Tanzanian coast. As seaweed is fairly particular about its environment, the water has to be carefully tested, especially for quality. ■

BBC Farming World

Planning a clean sweep in Beirut

It is going to take a long time to make the place once called the Pearl of the Mediterranean glisten again. But in Beirut, emerging from 16 years of civil war, the monumental task of fixing a city devastated by warring militias is under way.

In the short term, the goal is to clean up the millions of tons of debris from war and neglect. Meanwhile, longer-term plans are being made for restoring the city's tattered electricity, water and telephone networks. This requires major infrastructure planning activities with focus on urban planning, municipal engineering, sanitation services, utilities, public works, and urban and connecting inland surface transportation. The United Nations is involved in a variety of projects ranging from health to resettlement efforts. The United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development is providing technical support for this planning activity and assisting the government as well as other agencies involved in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Beirut and the country as a whole.

The flagship project, and one hoped to give a psychological boost to the country, could be the redevelopment of Beirut's 1.5-square-kilometre downtown district. Once home to the world's fifth-largest banking centre, it was virtually obliterated by the war.

The downtown area, once home to Middle East offices of all the world's major banks, is still a ghost town. The opera stands in ruins around the corner from a bombed-out cathedral and a 500-year-old mosque. Now curious tourists return to Martyr's Square to pose for photos beneath a bullet-ridden statue shadowed by the ominous skeletons of buildings. Considerable restoration work done in the early 1980s was once again blasted into ruins.

A $2 billion redevelopment plan that would turn the area over to a private company made up of property owners and investors is now before the Lebanese parliament.

Beirut residents now get only six hours of electricity daily (most have their own generators at this point), international phone calls are impossible from home and local calls unreliable. Virtually no water comes through the public system because 60 per cent leaks into the ground.

But the city is getting cleaner. An emergency operation has already carted away 10,000 cubic metres of sand from city streets and dredged 3,000 square metres of garbage out of its sewers. A fleet of 50 new garbage trucks is busy hauling 500 tons of refuse daily. For now the garbage is being disposed of in a landfill beside the downtown port district.

UN/John Isaac

The end to *Lebanon's civil war will have the biggest impact in Beirut.*

A senior official involved in the cleanup said: "In three or four months we will have a different Beirut—not the Beirut we want, but it will be more liveable."

The cleanup is co-ordinated by the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), a government agency created in 1977 but straitjacketed over the years by recurring and increasingly violent clashes between factions in Lebanon's civil war.

After Syrian and Lebanese forces regained dominance last year, sectarian militias that had turned Beirut into a battleground over the years agreed to put down their weapons and pull out of the capital.

Their departure erased the famous Green Line that divided the city into Muslim and Christian sectors and left Beirut in the hands of the Lebanese government and army for the first time since the war began in 1974.

Under CDR supervision, most of the work is being done by the construction company Oger Lebanon, owned by Rafic Hariri, a Lebanese-born Saudi millionaire, and paid for by a $60 million donation from Saudi Arabia. Millions more will be needed for anything more than cosmetic work.

One problem has been assessing the damage and setting priorities for action. In 1987 the Hariri Foundation conducted the first comprehensive study of Lebanon's needs for development and rehabilitation. That study, which covered infrastructure in over 2,000 localities around the country, has since been updated and is now being used as the basis for a further study by the construction firm Bechtel, also paid for by Hariri. The Bechtel study, submitted in October, will lay the groundwork for a long-term reconstruction plan for the whole country.

To promote the current clean-up effort, CDR has begun a TV campaign with snappy jingles urging Beirutis to put their garbage out only between 2 and 4 p.m. Trucks do pick-up from 4 to 8 p.m. CDR is hoping to offer Beirutis 12 hours of electricity a day within the next few months, but insiders are doubtful. They predict it will be four years before full power is restored.

A walk down any Beirut street reveals a spaghetti-like maze of wires running in every direction. With official power supplies lacking, the innovative Lebanese modified the system—nearly destroying it in the process. Officials estimate it will take more than $400 million and four years to install a proper telecommunications system.

The greatest single problem will be money. Lebanon had deals worth $100 million with Italy, France, Germany and the European Community for redevelopment funds. Those were frozen by the war and CDR hopes the money can now be released. CDR also expects the World Bank to reconsider its 1985 freeze on development funds for Lebanon.

The great hope, however, is that the Lebanese themselves, particularly the hundreds of thousands who fled during the war, will return and invest. "We will rely mainly on Lebanese private money," said Ali Serhal, adviser to CDR president Fadl Chalak. "There are many Lebanese with enough funds to invest. If they can come here and say they are confident enough to invest in their own country again then others would follow."

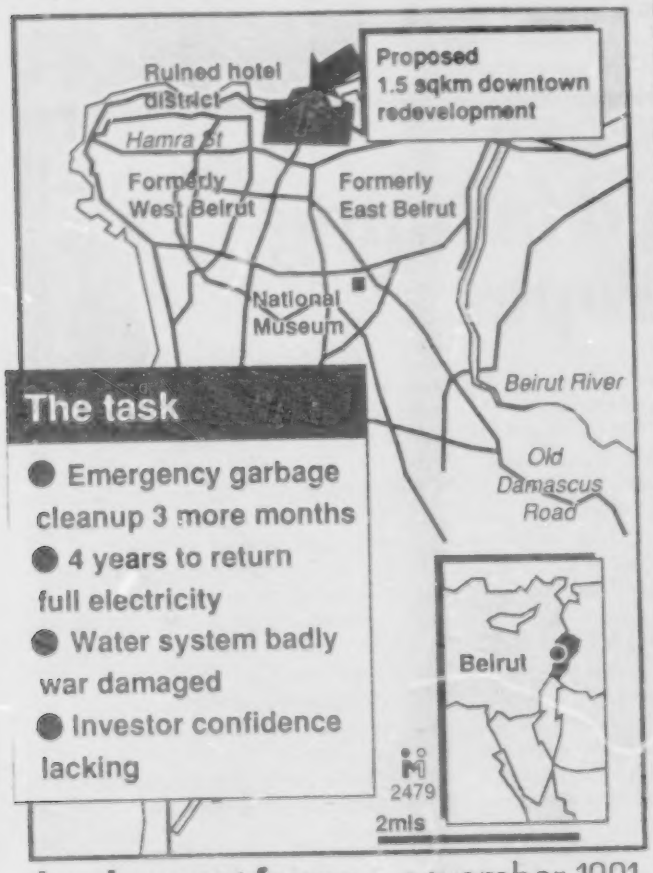
The International Monetary Fund estimates that expatriate Lebanese hold $15-$20 billion abroad. Of the money returning, much seems to be going after property. Bombed-out buildings sell for hundreds of thousands, even millions.

Lebanese will soon be chasing after one of the biggest urban developments in the Mediterranean.

But CDR is hoping that Lebanese will soon be chasing after one of the biggest urban developments in the Mediterranean—the $2 billion reconstruction of downtown Beirut, which it sees as the key to restoring confidence in the Lebanese economy. "The downtown is the main economic and financial centre for all Lebanon, so it must be considered as a whole. That would really mean the return of a national economy," Serhal said. "It could trigger the process of economic recovery for the country."

A modest recovery has already begun. More than 20 navigation companies have returned to Beirut port, once one of the busiest in the Mediterranean, but volume is still only half pre-war levels. Some 14 foreign airlines, including Air France and KLM, have come back to Beirut International Airport. ■

A.T.



Clam steaks, anyone?

Giant clam farms may be providing meat and earning big income for the South Pacific in the not-too-distant future.

In the tropical reefs of the Solomon Islands, where giant clams thrive, the government is co-operating with scientists of the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) to develop farming systems for growing giant clams, particularly *Tridacna gigas*, the largest species.

From its early microscopic stages of life, the clam settles in shallow waters and can grow to over 200kg, needing only a small space, clean flowing seawater, protection from predators during its juvenile phase and plenty of sunlight.

The giant clam manufactures its own food through chemical processes generated by sunlight. Hence, it is self-feeding and needs no external food sources. In about six years, the clam reaches market size. For the clam farmer, that translates into a lot of meat for practically no input.

Most parts of the giant clam are edible, but poachers take only the abductor muscle, an expensive delicacy in Chinese cuisine but representing a mere 10 per cent of the shellfish's weight. Recent overfishing and deteriorating environmental conditions in some coral reefs have diminished the stock of giant clams to such an extent that they may be in danger of extinction.

At the Coastal Aquaculture Centre, ICLARM's research station in the Solomon Islands, scientists are experimenting to create an environment which will promote the giant clam's survival, growth and reproduction. The vulnerable larvae are raised in tanks; later the baby clams are transferred to wire-mesh cages in sheltered reef areas. These ocean nurseries are operated by villagers who keep the cages free of predators.

So far, survival and growth rates have been encouraging and in a few years, the clams will be placed in the open sea and later harvested for export. The centre hopes to be able to supply baby clams to South Pacific nations to help in the development of giant clam farming.

New support last year from several donor agencies, primarily the British, Canadian and Australian governments, has allowed the Centre to increase its research and development efforts. ■

Agricultural Information Development Bulletin

Malawi

Likuni Phala, home-grown baby food

By Michael Pickstock

In Malawi, where the government estimates that 56 per cent of its infant population is malnourished, agencies are having success introducing a home-made food for weaning babies. But *Likuna Phala*, as it is known locally, is no wonder food devised in Western laboratories, processed in stainless steel vats, or packaged to catch the eye in shopping malls and supermarkets.

It is an entirely locally devised, produced and processed product: simple, low-cost and available. *Phala* means weaning food in Malawi's main language, Chichewa, and *Likuni* is the name of the religious mission where the blend of maize, groundnuts and beans was developed as a remedy to the widespread infant malnutrition.

The original recipe for *Likuni Phala* used maize, groundnuts and beans in the proportion of 2:1:1. When the mixture was sent for analysis, experts found that it had a nutritional content equal to any imported weaning food and at a substantial cost advantage. Later, the World Food Programme (WFP) became involved and soya bean was substituted for local beans, boosting its nutritional value even higher.

A simple educational programme has been devised to ensure knowledgeable use of *Likuna Phala*. Educational aides organized by the NGO Homecraft at the Ekwendeni Mission hospital north of Lilongwe, Malawi's capital city, teach mothers with the help of songs which contain key information, including the correct mixture of ingredients. The mothers are also taught that the soya beans, which contain chemicals that inhibit digestion, can be made digestible by roasting them in a clay pot over a moderate fire, instead of grinding them when raw. Also, the mothers learn that *Likuni Phala* is not an "instant" food; they cannot simply mix it with water and feed but must cook it first.

In fact, a recipe could have been devised to make *Likuni Phala* an instant "mix-and-eat" food, but this has been intentionally avoided. "In rural areas you cannot be sure of the quality of the water available, and hygiene for children is extremely important," explains Willem Wurdemann, of the Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, and a consultant on food processing to WFP. "If the people are forced to boil the mixture, at least the water will be safe and the porridge will be safe."

WFP supplies most of the ingredients for *Likuni Phala* produced by two major milling companies based in Blantyre, which also package and distribute the product nationally. To avoid transporting all the ingredients to one centre and then redistributing them, WFP, with the help of the Dutch government, is setting up five small regional processing centres. These will also offer employment and provide a new market for nearby farmers who grow maize, groundnuts and soya. Each regional mill will produce 500-1,000 kilogrammes per month of *Likuni Phala*, which will then be packed in 500-gramme packets, with a simple label giving cooking instructions.

Even though WFP's purchase of food ingredients within Malawi or in neighbouring countries keeps down the cost of *Likuni Phala*, the ultimate aim is to make families self-sufficient. To achieve this, WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund are working on a pilot project, in one of the neediest areas of northern Malawi, to encourage women heads of household with one hectare or less of land, to grow hybrid maize and soya, a crop new to Malawi. ■

USAID/Stein Jenstein

Protected workers transfer *toxic chemicals to special "isotanks" for return to the Netherlands.*

Niger

Reversing the toxic flow

A unique consortium involving the United States, Germany and companies of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group is helping the West African nation of Niger dispose of all its known stocks of dieldrin, a persistent and highly toxic pesticide.

Over a two-week period last May, nearly 20,000 gallons of dieldrin were collected in 200-gallon barrels in Niger, transferred to "isotanks" and transported to the Togolese port of Lomé. From there, the dieldrin was shipped to the Netherlands, together with the barrels, now cleaned, for destruction in a state-of-the-art high-temperature incinerator.

Niger was interested in having the dieldrin removed because, while the pesticide itself is stable, the containers are subject to corrosion, and some have begun to leak. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the German development assistance agency (GTZ), Shell Nederland Chemie, several Dutch government agencies and the government of Niger collaborated on the clean-up.

Once the pesticide of choice in combating locust infestations in Africa and Asia, dieldrin is no longer supported by international assistance organizations.

Dieldrin, formerly manufactured by Shell Nederland Chemie, was supplied for locust control in Africa by various international agencies over the last 30 years. Shell stopped its manufacture in 1987, and the plant is being dismantled. The cost of the removal, estimated at $350,000, was funded jointly by USAID and GTZ.

The stocks of dieldrin are being shipped to the Netherlands because there are no suitable alternative chemical disposal facilities in Africa.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), there are old or unwanted stocks of dieldrin in some 21 countries, largely in the locust belt in Africa north of the equator, but also as far east as Pakistan and India. ■

Frontlines

Indonesia

Asia's first airliner

By Stephen Carr

Bandung—When the first N-250 airliner rolls out of the hangar in Indonesia in 1994 it will mark a milestone for Asian aviation—the first aircraft totally designed and manufactured in a developing country without outside assistance.

The manufacturer, Nusantara Aircraft Industries (IPTN), has been making planes and parts under licence from foreign makers for 15 years. "We began by buying an aircraft and operating it and we progressed to learning how to assemble an airplane," says Wisnubroto, deputy director of industrial relations. "Then we learned how to manufacture the components." The turboprop N-250 aircraft, expected to be ready for delivery in 1996, will be a high-technology product but of simple, sturdy design, with low fuel consumption. Seating 50, it will have the widest body in its class.

The second national airline, Merpati (which means pigeon), has ordered 65 N-250s (N stands for Nusantara or archipelago) and Bouraq, another domestic airline, has ordered 62.

The new plane also has many more potential customers among the country's 45 private, church mission, mining industry and other airlines that service this island nation. Export potential has been demonstrated by a first order of 24 by the Swedish aircraft leasing company FFV.

The main reason for developing the new aircraft is to meet Indonesia's own domestic needs. The only practical way to get around Indonesia is by air. From the western tip of Sumatra to the far eastern reaches of Irian Jaya (Western New Guinea), this vast archipelago of 13,667 islands straddles the Indian and Pacific Oceans on both sides of the equator. It extends for more than 4,800 kilometres—the distance between New York and Los Angeles. From north to south its boundaries encompass over 2,000 kilometres. A booming tourist industry creates an ever-increasing need for domestic feeder flights from the main international arrival points like Jakarta.

In Irian Jaya there are no fewer than 40 airstrips, served by an eccentric collection of aircraft. In the outer islands many airfields are grassy strips where goats and cows must be chased off before landings. Some terminals are thatched or wooden huts containing a single table.

Assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is helping to ensure that IPTN's inspectors and engineers will be trained to comply with the manufacturing, airworthiness and design standards set by the Federal Aviation Administration of the United States. Some 600 personnel are being trained through two projects which began in 1987. One project is equipping the IPTN Training Centre, as well as Indonesia's Civil Aviation Training Centre at Curug, to train airworthiness inspectors to certify that aircraft and aircraft components conform to international norms. The two centres are also developing the capability to train inspectors to certify that aircraft and aircraft components are overhauled, maintained or modified in accordance with approved procedures.

ICAO's chief technical adviser for training is Ray Habib, an aeronautical engineer trained at the American University in Beirut and Sydney University in Australia, with wide experience in civil aviation. "I am really impressed with the facilities here," he says. "The machinery is the best you can find."

There is, however, a darker side to the development of Indonesia's new manufacturing capacity. A thriving part of the aircraft business is the production of parts for jetfighters. IPTN has contracts to make components for F-16 fighters since 1988, and last year it signed an agreement with Fokker of the Netherlands to make F-100s. It also manufactures some military hardware, including a Messerschmidtt helicopter gunship, torpedoes under license from Germany's Telefunken, and Belgian air and ground-launched rockets. ■

Humas

Prototype of N-250 airliner *is based on Indonesian design.*

Stephen Carr is a correspondent for Gemini News Service. Based in South-East Asia, he specializes in environmental issues.

Danes debate aid policy

Continued from page 1

According to an analysis prepared by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Denmark contributed about 46 per cent to multilateral aid last year. Only Ireland came in higher, but the lion's share of its aid is directed to the European Community—and not to the United Nations system, as in the case of Denmark. The United Kingdom and Belgium followed next, but these countries also set aside fairly large shares of aid to the EC. Only Norway (fifth on the list)—with 41 per cent—is comparable to Denmark.

Many Western donor countries have been shifting back to bilateral aid.

More 'tied' aid

An array of Danish business organizations and trade unions came out in support of a proposal to change the traditional 50/50 per cent share between bilateral and multilateral aid in favour of augmenting the tied aid. The Conservative Party, which rules in coalition with the Liberal Party, is pressing that only 25 per cent of Denmark's current $1.1 billion annual development aid budget be channelled to international organizations in the future (the figure corresponds to 1 per cent of Denmark's GDP). The remaining 75 per cent would constitute bilateral aid. As a result, Danish business will stand to gain orders worth hundreds of millions of dollars and generating perhaps 5,000 new jobs.

"Danish companies, and particularly the small ones, ought to take much more advantage of aid," said Lars P. Gammelgaard, president of the Conservative Party's caucus in Parliament. He continued: "Denmark should focus on projects that easily can be controlled and which benefit the recipients as well as the Danish business community."

Danish foreign minister Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, who is chairman of the Liberal Party, declared his support for the Conservatives' proposal, although he added that the process of transferring money from the multilateral to the bilateral account would have to be a gradual one. "A great deal of the funds are already locked in multilateral aid projects that we cannot simply withdraw from immediately," he said.

In the beginning of November, Ellemann-Jensen suggested to Parliament that aid to United Nations organizations ought to decrease from 47 to 40 per cent of Denmark's annual ODA budget over a five-year period ending in 1996. In return, the bilateral and "tied" aid would increase correspondingly, the foreign minister said. As a result the minority government plans to freeze United Nations aid at 3.9 billion kroner. Supporters of the more liberal multilateral aid policy were bewildered by this shift. Yet, after spirited debate, several parties in Parliament, spearheaded by the Social Democrats, also declared themselves willing to compromise with the conservative position.

Recipients have choice

Traditionally, the policy giving greater weight to multilateral ODA has been based on the premise that recipient countries were better able themselves to pick the right contractors or appropriate products for development projects at the most competitive prices. Pooled funds allocated by multilateral agencies also greatly reduced the temptation to tie aid to the political and economic interests of the donor countries, which were often not the same as the needs of the recipients.

Despite these advantages, many Western donor nations have been shifting back to bilateral aid, as they see that country-to-country projects had advantages—certainly for business at home, but perhaps also for developing countries. Thus, Denmark was left as one of the few countries that still channels a very large share of its development aid through international organizations.

Numbers provided by OECD show that major industrial powers like France (18 per cent), United States (23.27 per cent), Japan (27.1 per cent), Italy (32.5 per cent) and Germany (34.3 per cent) all provide one third or less ODA through multilaterals.

Furthermore, Danish business organizations assert that companies from these countries usually have an easier time winning contracts within the United Nations procurement system. "We find it quite impossible even to be registered on a short list—which is indispensable in qualifying as a serious bidder," said Jørgen Ploug from I. Kruger, a Danish environmental company that operates widely in developing countries.

He added: "It's pretty obvious that United Nations officials from the former colonial powers are able to favour companies from their own countries when selection for the short lists takes place—and they do it." He did not extend his criticism to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, which use open procedures in selecting the winning companies.

A striking example of the disparity between aid input and business output can be seen in the Danish relationship with UNDP, the largest multilateral development organization based in New York. Last year Denmark donated about $70 million to UNDP, but Danish companies only managed to obtain orders valued at around $2 million.

Aid experts, business managers and politicians in Copenhagen argued that the only way to change this situation would be for the government to put direct pressure on the United Nations. Without an improvement, they said, it would be unsustainable—from a political point of view—to carry on the present generous donor policy. This pressure, in turn, has prompted ongoing debate within the multilaterals regarding the extent to which donors can or should influence their allocation of funds.

To counter the Danish government's plans the United Nations called a press conference in Copenhagen last November. Here it was pointed out that four United Nations offices in Denmark annually contribute up to 500 million kroner to the Danish economy in terms of procurement from Danish companies, income transfers to employees, etc. The offices belong to the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Information Centre.

Another important point made during the Danish debate referred to the administrative expenses incurred by international organizations through which aid is channelled. Why not let the Danish Development Aid Agency (DANIDA) dispose of this money, it was asked; DANIDA operates in a much more efficient way.

Finally, and not the least, the proponents of change argued that the receiver countries actually would be better off with bilateral aid projects as opposed to aid directed by international agencies. This point was made in spite of the fact that several major aid projects organized by DANIDA in some of the world's poorest countries recently foundered. ■

Martin Burcharth, a Danish national, is the Rome-based correspondent of the Danish financial daily Borsen.

Nordic UN Project: Concern over multilateral aid

By Monika Gutestam

The Nordic countries—Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden—are taking the lead in the debate over how to make the multilateral system of foreign assistance more effective. A report made by the Nordic United Nations Project, a joint Nordic research undertaking on the United Nations and its activities, outlines trends and prospects for funding the United Nations system and development banks in the 1990s. From a position of supporting multilateral assistance, the Project calls for a better definition of the roles of the international finance institutions (IFIs)—the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank—and the United Nations system in operational activities in order to strengthen their development impact.

The report, *Financing the Multilateral System: Options for Funding the UN System and the Development Banks*, says that during the 1980s, the multinational development banks (MDBs)—the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank—took on a greater responsibility than originally intended in the development assistance field. Lack of United Nations funds and resources and the rapid expansion of the activities of IFIs led to a shift in the execution of technical assistance projects from United Nations agencies to MDBs. This shift has led to a counterproductive competition which could in the long run marginalize the performance of the United Nations system in the development assistance arena as well as overburden MDBs.

Funding problem

At the core of the problem is the underfunding of multilateral aid agencies. United Nations agencies have not been able to deliver the necessary technical assistance in such fields as education, health, environment or agriculture, forcing IFIs to get involved in these areas, too. During the 1980s, the World Bank provided technical assistance amounting to $1.2 billion per year, while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided $0.9 billion.

A second reason for the "migration" of technical assistance projects from United Nations agencies to IFIs is the growing recognition that investment projects and programmes must be supported by a parallel development of institutions and capacities in order to reach their full economic impact. This criterion has been realized by IFIs which have made institution-building a priority for the 1990s.

We must not let the vast United Nations system of development co-operation become marginalized.

Unless this trend is reversed in the 1990s, the Nordics argue that it will weaken the entire multilateral system. MDBs will be increasingly weighed down by functions and mandates they were not designed to handle. United Nations agencies will fall into a vicious circle of "reduced funding-diminished performance-even less funding". Currently, virtually every United Nations agency is wasting valuable time scrambling for funds from individual donors. If the United Nations system is to become more useful and responsive to different needs, donors must take their responsibility seriously and provide regular resources for the agencies.

The recent World Bank proposals for a Global Environmental Facility illustrate well these two problems. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established in 1972. However, UNEP has never attained the level of funding needed to fulfil its mandate of combatting global environmental problems. When environmental issues became a global concern in 1989, other multilateral agencies began to assume UNEP's role as the expert organization on the environment. Many donors are now turning to the World Bank, for example, for action in the environmental sphere. While recognizing that environmental components should be part of every development effort, the Nordics believe the Bank's role should be to finance environmental projects, not to assume the mandate of a global environmental agency.

UN valuable

It would be a great loss to the international community if the vast United Nations system of development co-operation becomes marginalized. The United Nations development staff possess extensive work experience in the field and a reputation for impartial development co-

Continued on page 9

operation. The United Nations enjoys a very special reputation in the developing countries, something which would be very hard to re-create. A reduction of the role of United Nations agencies would most seriously affect the developing countries, leaving them with a more limited choice of development assistance.

The multilateral organizations, says the Nordic United Nations Project, have to find complementary roles in the area of development assistance instead of competing with each other. While the World Bank evidently possesses greater resources and capabilities in the area of economic development, United Nations organizations have a definite role in assisting the developing countries in other areas, such as government, public administration, health, education, environment, population planning, etc.

In finding complementary and alternative roles for IFIs and United Nations agencies, it is important not to restrict the former, but to enhance the efficiency of the operational activities of the latter. While it has previously been difficult to achieve efficient reforms in this area, the Nordics argue that the 1990s can provide a window of opportunity for successful new attempts to achieve constructive reforms.

Aid

Japan revises aid policy

Tokyo—The Japanese government is revising its official development assistance (ODA) policy with promises to promote "fair and equal development" in the Third World through self-help.

According to a study recently released by the Economic Planning Agency (EPA), the new guidelines provide some long-needed "philosophy" to direct Japan's official aid budget which, at $9.09 billion, is the world's second largest after the United States last year.

It is proposed that aid follow an index system based on the gross national product (GNP) of the recipient country. But Fumihiro Nishizaka of EPA stressed that the disbursement of Japanese aid to developing countries will not be gauged solely on increasing GNP figures.

"By measuring and analyzing the recipient country's GNP statistics, birth rates, tax system, education and health expenses, money supply, savings and government budget, we could determine the growth rate of that country and the efforts of the government towards improving things," said Nishizaka.

For example, most developing countries should be working towards lowering birth rates, increasing education and health budgets, reducing inflation and following a fair tax system that does not overly rely on the lower-income groups while protecting privileged classes, he said.

These factors would indicate the sincerity of the country's self-help efforts which is what is important, Nishizaka pointed out.

The new ODA report is widely seen as an effort by the government to add muscle to its formidable aid programme that gives Japan a pre-eminent position in the world and gives Tokyo its main foreign-policy leverage.

But some aid experts are not too impressed by the new report. "The principle of helping the poor has always been there but Japan's assistance has not always worked towards that goal," said Kazu Sumi, an ODA analyst. "There are no guarantees that the new report will adjust the flaws."

For instance, the report makes no promise of increasing grant aid or reducing interest-bearing yen loans which comprise a vast majority of Japan's development aid to Asia.

Giving priority to infrastructure, another pillar of Japanese ODA that the EPA report left unmentioned, also works against the self-help principle, argue some critics, including Robert Orr, a noted ODA authority in Japan.

The policy supports yen loans as well as the promotion of Japanese business interests, analysts point out.

Human rights and the promotion of democracy are the other aid criteria mentioned by the EPA report.

Suvendrini Kakuchi/IPS

Environment

Treaty for cleaner Mediterranean

Cairo—Fifteen Mediterranean countries and the European Community (EC) agreed here in October on common measures against pollution by solid litter, disease-causing micro-organisms, pesticides and radioactive substances in the Mediterranean Sea.

"This is another step in the 16-year-old programme to make Mediterranean beaches and coastal waters cleaner and safer for swimming and eating seafood," said William H. Mansfield III, deputy executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which organized the signing of the so-called Barcelona treaty for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution.

"When we started, probably 80 per cent of Mediterranean beaches and their coastal waters were dirty and unsafe for swimming," agreed Ljubomir Jeftic, the senior marine scientist at UNEP's Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) headquarters in Athens. "Today, I think we have pretty well reversed the percentages."

The signatories also noted that their group of experts had agreed on the text of a protocol, that is an international agreement, on offshore exploration and exploitation of petroleum, gas and minerals. They passed it on to their new bureau which must decide whether to ask UNEP to convoke a plenipotentiary conference for its formal adoption, which is likely some time in 1992.

On that occasion, a proposed ban on the incineration of wastes at sea and the dumping of industrial wastes in the sea—both amendments to the Mediterranean dumping protocol—will be submitted for adoption to the plenipotentiaries.

In their agreement on pollution by solid litter, disease-causing micro-organisms, pesticides and radioactive substances, the Mediterranean governments and the EC acted on an assessment of the situation, and then specified control measures.

While no quantitative assessment of litter input, levels and decay in the Mediterranean Sea and along its 45,000 km of coastline exists, it is known that close to 3/4 of coastal litter consists of plastic materials. Metal, glass and wood largely account for the rest. Floating litter is almost entirely plastics. It would appear that most of the Mediterranean coastal litter is left strewn about by visitors, whereas litter on the Atlantic beaches of Europe is mostly discarded from ships.

While litter does not make beach-goers ill, it does endanger fish, marine mammals, turtles and birds through entanglement and ingestion. Littered beaches and bathing waters also have a negative impact on tourism.

"Focus on Your World" UNEP photo competition

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has launched "Focus on Your World", a worldwide photographic competition, to heighten international environmental awareness.

The organizers invite entries that depict the beauty of the earth as well as those which encourage improvements in the control of pollution and the elimination of the destruction of natural resources which now plague the global environment.

Announcement of the winning entries and awarding of prizes will be made at the World Environment Day ceremonies in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 5 June 1992 during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1-12 June).

There will be three entry divisions: professional, amateur and children's. First-prize winners will get cash awards of $20,000, $10,000 and $1,000, respectively.

The deadline for submission of entries is 29 February 1992.

To obtain application forms or for more information, write to UNEP Photographic Competition, P.O. Box 548, Sayreville, NJ 08871, United States, or UNEP Photographic Competition, UNEP Headquarters, P.O. Box 45326, Nairobi, Kenya.

Commodities

Tropical juices spill onto world market

International sales of fruit juices have shown spectacular growth over the last few decades, increasing threefold since 1980, which is good news for many developing countries. Total world trade in fruit and vegetable juices reached almost $4 billion in 1989 and went up to an estimated $5 billion in 1990.

According to a new International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT (ITC) market study entitled *Fruit Juices, with Special Reference to Citrus and Tropical Fruit Juices: A Study of the World Market*,* this trade is especially important for developing countries, as they account for about half of total world exports.

Although one of them, Brazil, is by far the largest juice exporter, a number of other developing countries also supply fruit juices and pulp on the international market, and several additional ones have the potential to do so.

The major exporters among developing countries, apart from Brazil, are Argentina and Mexico. Among other developing countries in this trade are Thailand, Morocco, the Philippines, Belize, Chile, Turkey, India and Kenya. Countries from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) import the vast majority of tropical juices.

Of the various juices, orange predominates on the world market, accounting for over 50 per cent of the total traded, followed by pineapple, grapefruit and other citrus fruit juices.

ITC, a subsidiary of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), works closely with developing countries to promote their trade and market opportunities.

World Bank/Mia Glazer

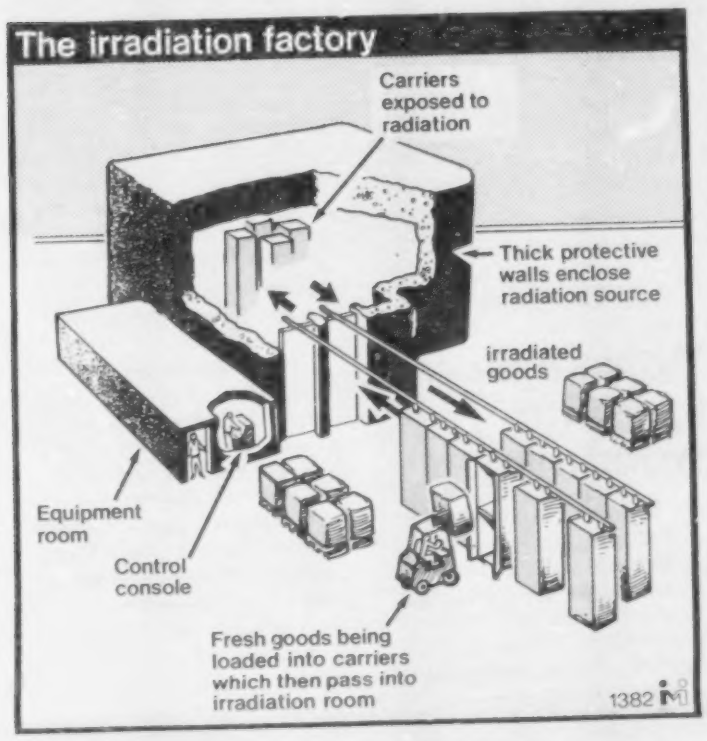
***Workers at a** pineapple plantation in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, loading fruits for juice processing*

*The comprehensive report is available from the ITC office at Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Tel. 022 730 01 11.

Food

Irradiation gaining acceptance

Africa's first commercial-scale food irradiation plant is being constructed in Cote d'Ivoire, marking a new step in the slow acceptance of the technology, especially among developing countries. The private plant, using Canadian-built equipment, will irradiate yams, an important staple in the region.


The irradiation factory
Carriers exposed to radiation
Thick protective walls enclose radiation source
irradiated goods
Equipment room
Control console
Fresh goods being loaded into carriers which then pass into irradiation room
1382

Irradiation is the use of ionizing energy, such as gamma rays, X-rays and electrons, for processing foods and other commercial products. The treatment cannot add radioactivity to any material including food.

The foods are exposed to the penetrating energy of the irradiators, which have a cobalt-60 source, immobilizing bacteria, insect larvae and enzymes which trigger ripening and sprouting.

Some 50 products from fresh fruit to potatoes to unshelled eggs have been approved by national authorities in 36 countries as suitable for irradiation for public consumption.

After 40 years of international research and 11 years after the 130-country Codex Alimentarius Commission of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) found that irradiation of "any food commodity presents no toxicological hazard", only about 500,000 tons of foods and ingredients are now irradiated annually worldwide, a minute amount compared with the volumes processed in other ways.

Experts from FAO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and WHO have urged governments to adopt the use of irradiation to rid fruits and vegetables of insects and to overcome quarantine barriers. The recommendation was made at a task force meeting convened by the FAO/IAEA/WHO International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation. The experts' report emphasized that treated products are "safe for the consumer".

Opposition to the technique remains active. Still, the technology has special appeal in the South as a method of reducing very substantial post-harvest crop losses. For example, India wants to save its surplus onion crops from sprouting and going pulpy, and Bangladesh would like to ensure that its packeted sun-dried saltfish is not reduced to bones by microbial and larval activity before it gets to the consumer's kitchen.

Developing countries that are important exporters of fresh fruit and vegetables anticipate problems if conventional chemical fumigants and insecticides are banned in the North. Some chemicals have already been taken off the market as being carcinogenic, while others are being studied. Without guarantees that their commodities are free of pest larvae, they fear their exports may also be banned. They also see opportunities for more high-value export items such as seafoods.

Gamini Seneviratne

World food stocks falling

FAO (Rome)—The latest harvest returns confirm a sharp decline in world cereal output, with global cereal production in 1991 estimated at 1,885 million tons, some 4 per cent less than in 1990 and below consumption requirements in 1991/1992. Most of the decline in production has been in the USSR and the United States. In developing countries a marginal increase is in prospect, despite lower output in Asia.

Even assuming no growth in global utilization of cereals in 1991, world carryover stocks at the end of the 1991/1992 crop season will be drawn down sharply, mainly in the developed countries, to the low end of the range (the lowest since 1976) that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) secretariat considers necessary to safeguard world food security.

Situation in Africa

Regional food supply problems persist. In sub-Saharan Africa, the harvest prospects are better in several areas, but substantial international assistance will continue to be necessary in 1992. In Sudan, early forecasts point to an overall cereal harvest better than in 1990 but shortages of seeds have limited plantings in Darfur and Kordofan where it is already clear that emergency assistance will again be required in 1992.

Similarly, in Ethiopia, although a better harvest is in prospect, several areas in the north and east have been affected by unfavourable weather and crop failures. In Somalia, some 4.5 million people are at risk, with widespread starvation reported, particularly in the central and southern regions. In Mozambique an estimated 1.9 million drought-affected and displaced people are facing serious food shortages.

The food supply situation remains serious in Angola while in Liberia security problems have led to another well-below-average output of rice. In Zaire, acute shortages have emerged in urban areas where unemployment has sharply increased.

Habitat

Innovative housing projects honoured

Nairobi—The Core Shelter Project of the Philippines' Department of Social Welfare and Development was among the World Habitat Day award winners honoured at a ceremony in Hiroshima, Japan, on 7 October by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). *(See related item on page 23.)*

The World Habitat Day award honours innovative, sustainable and replicative housing projects around the world. The award, which includes a cash prize, has been provided annually by the Building and Social Housing Foundation of the United Kingdom since 1985.

Another 1991 award winner was the Attic Flats Project of Prague, Czechoslovakia, where 350 apartments have been constructed in attics or on flat roofs of existing buildings during the past two years.

The other two winners, both based in the San Francisco area of California, United States, were the Frank G. Mar community-based housing project and the Two Worlds Mountain View Project.

The former incorporates several innovative features, including a mixture of different building types and land uses, safe pedestrian alleys and innovative financial mechanisms.

Mountain View Project attempts to revive an old design concept of a home over a store. According to Habitat, the project could be regarded as a prototype of a suburban mixed-use environment.

Housing institutions in seven developing countries and two individuals were also winners of the Habitat Scroll of Honour for 1991. They are the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements of Costa Rica, the Urban Development Authority of Singapore, the National Housing Development Authority of Sri Lanka, the Housing Development Finance Corporation of India, the Sengki land-sharing project of Thailand, the Project Assistance a l'Ecosat of Burundi and the Institute of Building Materials of Viet Nam.

Environment

The greening of transnationals

New York—Despite indications of considerable corporate concern for environmental issues, transnational corporations have yet to address several basic areas of environmental management, according to the results of a recently completed Benchmark Survey conducted by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC). The survey, undertaken as a contribution to the preparations for the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio next June, examined the environmental practices of over 200 of the world's biggest and most environmentally innovative transnational corporations. It was designed to inform governments, international organizations and the broader public of the state of environmentally sound management in transnational corporations. It also hopes to help set up a model framework for transnational and other major firms not yet engaged in environmental management.

Programmes which directly reduce corporate costs such as energy conservation and recycling were frequently cited. However, less than half of the firms coordinated their environmental policies internationally or published a formal international environmental policy. While the corporations gave importance to such headline issues as atmospheric protection, toxic wastes and freshwater protection, issues such as biodiversity and urban and rural poverty are not yet high on the corporate agenda.

The report found that in over three fourths of the firms, top management was involved in initiating environmental programmes and that two thirds of the firms had some sort of audit programme in place.

Over half the respondents, however, did not utilize any international guidelines in their policy development. In fact, many of these firms were unaware of the nature or existence of particular international guidelines.

More often than not, corporate headquarters lacked basic information about the firms' environmental activities. A majority of the responding transnationals are disposing waste outside the country of origin.

And while central managers are seeking more control over the company-wide handling of environmental, health and safety issues, they are tending to overlook enforcement in developing countries. Less than a quarter monitor air emissions in developing countries. One third do not know if plants in these countries are located near freshwater supplies. In a number of cases, headquarters are not aware whether any formal mechanism exists to monitor affiliates in developing countries.

Regional differences were also noted in the study. European-based transnationals had significantly fewer self-regulatory measures than Japanese- or American-based corporations. American-based firms tended to have more disclosure practices while Japanese-based firms showed a more widespread environmental involvement throughout the organization.

The survey responses and unusually high response rate did indicate that these corporations are willing and capable to act as resources during the upcoming Earth Summit, officially known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The transnationals expressed high interest in United Nations involvement in harmonizing and setting international guidelines.

Responsible for the majority of world trade, the bulk of environmentally innovative technology and a vast proportion of the world's foreign direct investment, transnational corporations will undoubtedly play a key role in the shaping of a more sustainable world, according to the study's authors.

For further information, contact the Environmental Unit, United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, 2 United Nations Plaza, Room 1202, New York, NY 10017, United States.

United Kingdom: No aid for tobacco

Britain has announced that its overseas development aid will no longer be provided to support the tobacco sector in developing countries, particularly those in Africa.

The new ruling from London will have a major impact on Africa's tobacco farmers who depend on this cash crop for their livelihood. Several countries, including Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania, may face the loss of vital foreign exchange generated by the export of tobacco.

Britain argues that its decision to cut aid to tobacco farmers should be viewed as a positive measure to combat the ill-effects of smoking and the resultant strain on the already crippled health infrastructures in many countries. There will also be positive environmental consequences to the ruling as tobacco production leads to heavy deforestation problems.

According to British overseas development minister Lynda Chalker: "Tobacco remains an important crop and source of export earnings and budgetary revenue in some developing countries. There is, however, increasing evidence that the health risks associated with tobacco consumption will affect developing countries most severely, and place increasing burden on their health budgets which in most cases are already inadequate."

World Bank/James Pickerell

Tobacco being loaded *for drying in Lilongwe, Malawi.*

Chalker pointed out that recent research on the health risks of tobacco had painted an alarming picture of rapidly rising costs in the developing countries over the coming decades, both in terms of lives and health expenditure.

The British minister said that, from now on, her government will continue to help developing countries lessen their tobacco consumption in order to reduce the tragic consequences for their peoples, and encourage farmers in developing countries dependent on tobacco crops to diversify into alternative activities.

Newslink Africa

Disaster decade
Targets for preparedness

The Scientific and Technical Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, which is charged with developing overall programmes for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, is pressing member states to endorse the natural disaster reduction targets adopted for the Decade. These targets stress risk assessment, mitigation and warning.

The Committee urged that by the year 2000, all countries, as part of their plan to achieve sustainable development, should have in place comprehensive national assessments of risks from natural hazards, with these assessments taken into account in development plans; mitigation plans at the national or local levels, including long-term prevention and preparedness and community awareness; and ready access to global, regional, national and local warning systems.

The Committee also called for a world conference on natural disaster reduction in 1994 for the national committees. Nearly 100 such committees have been formed worldwide. It hoped that the targets would be explicitly recognized by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio, June 1992).

Underlining the need for disaster preparedness, the report cited the devastating effects during 1990-1991 of the tropical cyclone in Bangladesh, a volcanic eruption in Japan, a volcanic eruption coupled with a tropical storm in the Philippines and floods in China.

In 1990 alone, natural disasters caused economic losses of $47 billion and, in the last 20 years, natural disasters had cost the lives of some three million people and affected at least 800 million human beings.

South
Group of 15 consolidates for new world order

Caracas –The emerging new group of middle-income developing countries, known as the Group of 15, is beginning to press for its participation in the definition of a new world order that is slowly emerging in this post-cold-war era. At their second summit in Caracas in November, G-15 leaders spoke of a new international consensus for a global concept of development, based on a "single world" and requiring a renewed North-South dialogue.

The Group of 15 stressed that the elimination of poverty, access to world markets, new concepts of security based on social and economic considerations, the democratization of the United Nations, and the aspirations of the developing world, must be the basic pillars for the constitution of a new world order.

With regard to the democratization of the United Nations, the Group of 15 leaders are expected to submit a joint petition to the United Nations as soon as secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali assumes his new post. Ghali attended the preliminary sessions prior to the summit.

The G-15, made up of Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Yugoslavia, met for the first time in 1990 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. China and Iran have applied for membership.

Carlos Andres Pérez, the Venezuelan president and host of the second meeting, stressed that the G-15 will attempt to be a "motor" in support of the South's interests, "without unleashing competition with other groups of the South", such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.

Estrella Gutierrez/IPS

Global economy at year's end

A surge of optimism about the world economy that began in 1989 with the end of the cold war and the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union was followed almost immediately by a slide of the world economy into recession. While this is partly coincidence, the experience of the past two years also draws attention to the magnitude of the tasks that still need to be accomplished at both national and international levels, if the peace dividend is to be reaped and the newly released forces of liberalism can be productively harnessed.

It appears now that these tasks are to be viewed in a longer-term perspective than previously thought. Meanwhile some specific issues demand more immediate attention as 1991 draws to a close.

The world economy has been slowing down over the past three years and per capita incomes in 1991 were lower than in 1989, sharply so in many countries. The most urgent task in the world economy is to get it growing again.

There appears little doubt about the need for urgent action for stimulating growth in some major developed economies, especially the United States, which account for a large proportion of world output. While guarding against inflation must remain a major objective of economic policy in any country, in a situation of large unemployment of manpower and productive capacity and depressed demand, fiscal stimulus need not be inflationary especially if it is clearly understood to be a temporary impulse.

There is little choice in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union than to resolutely pursue programmes of restructuring. The rest of the world needs to help with a combination of financial resources and generous offers of opportunities to trade, particularly with the European Community. Assistance need not be mere benevolence; rising social tension in the economies in transition could easily have serious repercussions in the rest of Europe, including a large flow of immigrants.

Though the developing economies as a whole did not slide into recession with the rest of the world in 1991, a large number of these economies continue to founder.

Growth in these countries needs, first of all, a continuation of structural adjustment and reform. But this is unlikely to be achieved in the absence of an increased flow of resources from the rest of the world. Social tension is already high in a large number of countries after years of stabilization efforts and stagnation. This has the potential of frustrating these efforts and tension can spill over to the rest of the world.

The debt problem looks more manageable for some countries while it remains serious for others. While the current efforts at debt relief should be intensified, more attention needs to be given to increasing the flow of new money to the debtor countries and less on how large the existing debt burden is.

Though the need for resources in the developing countries as well as in the economies in transition has been increasing, their supply has not. In particular, the growth of International Monetary Fund resources has fallen well below the growth of the world economy. The 50 per cent increase in its resources under the Ninth General Review of Quotas was approved in June 1990 and needs to be effected promptly.

Of all the issues that confront the international community, few are as critical as the strengthening of the multilateral trading system. Both determination and wisdom will be necessary in order to bring the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to a successful conclusion. This is essential for strengthening the system, but it could also lead to renewed confidence and increased investments leading to early recovery of growth.

This is an excerpt from the year-end survey by the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

Human rights
World conference set for 1993

The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights is tentatively scheduled to be held in Berlin for two weeks in June 1993.

Opening the first session of the preparatory committee for the world conference, in Geneva in September 1991, Jan Martenson, under-secretary-general for human rights and secretary-general of the world conference, stressed that the conference was part of a larger process of reaffirming and strengthening human rights. It hopes to reaffirm international standards and improve the universal application of United Nations norms.

The preparatory committee, which will meet in Geneva twice more in 1992 and once in 1993, is to consider the draft provisional agenda and related documentation for the conference at its second session in March 1992.

Debt crisis persists

Continued from page 1

beyond the bilateral debt relief covered by the existing Toronto Terms (1988) offered by the Paris Club of official creditors".

In his final report to the General Assembly on the external debt crisis, secretary-general Javier Pérez de Cuéllar pointed out that, although long-term relief had gradually become an accepted component of the international debt-management strategy, it had not led to a significant reduction of the debt burden.

He noted that, since about two thirds of the debt of the poorest countries (and 35 per cent of their debt service) were related to official development assistance loans, official debt write-offs could contribute significantly to easing the debt burden of these countries.

Antoine Blanca, the United Nations director-general for development and international economic co-operation, highlighted this ongoing concern in his recent address before the General Assembly's Economic and Social Committee, arguing that "the required amount of debt reduction is large enough, and the need is urgent enough, to merit political decisions at the highest levels of governments."

While noting that some progress had been registered during the past two years in relieving the foreign debt of developing countries, Blanca cited the fact that the debt burden of most developing and many countries in transition continued to be extremely heavy and that debt servicing also continued to be a drain on domestic savings, utilizing a large part of their foreign exchange earnings.

In spite of a slight decline in the debt to GDP ratio and debt service ratio, particularly in the 15 heavily indebted countries, of the six countries that have successfully completed debt renegotiations, only three have gradually established voluntary access to capital markets.

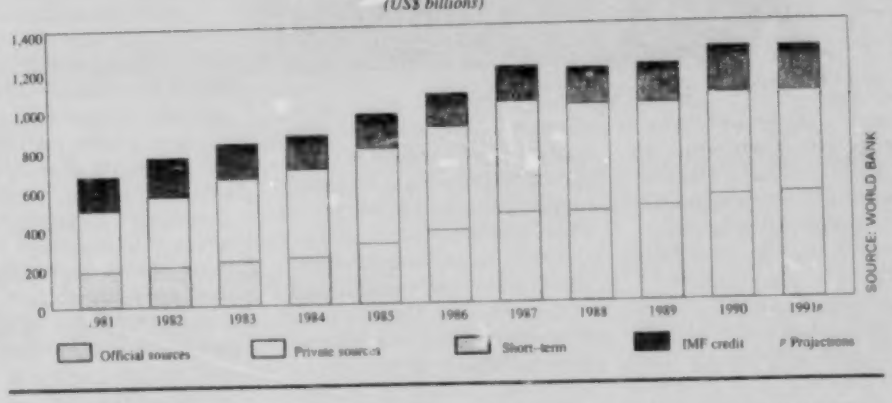
The information presented by the Bretton Woods institutions—the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund—during their annual meetings in Bangkok in October, albeit optimistic on possible future developments, was bleak on the short term. Indeed, the net long-term resource flows into the severely indebted low-income countries has declined since 1986. In the case of the severely indebted middle-income countries, these flows continue to be negative by a considerable amount.

Blanca specifically cited the need for the industrialized countries to adopt appropriate fiscal, monetary and trade policies and achieve greater co-ordination among themselves so that the reform and restructuring efforts of developing countries could be matched with adequate external financing and an open trading system that would allow these countries to adjust with growth.

Failing that, said Blanca, many countries would continue to be marginalized from international trade and financial markets under the heavy weight of debt.

Thus, if more meaningful debt reduction packages are to be undertaken, the governments of the creditor countries and the multilateral institutions, despite the very real budgetary restraints some of them now feel, will have to make a significantly greater effort to promote such packages.

External Debt, 1981–91
(US$ billions)



Africa

Nowhere is the debt burden more onerous than in Africa. Africa's total debt is virtually equal to the continent's entire annual economic output. The $25 billion debt service bill in 1990 was greater than the total aid received by Africa in the previous year—$21 billion. The World Bank has warned that debt payments will rise steeply in the 1990s in the absence of significant cancellations.

Several initiatives have been taken towards alleviating this debt burden. Specifically, the Group of Seven most industrialized countries has, since its 1987 Venice summit, and more so since its Toronto summit in 1988, written off or reduced certain categories of African debt. Up to 1990, the cancellations totalled some $7.6 billion, and such creditors as France and Italy have announced further measures.

However, as pointed out in the secretary-general's report for the final review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD), the benefits of such initiatives have been limited, not only because of the small number of beneficiary countries but also because of the magnitude of the debt burden.

Some creditor countries have recognized this problem, hence the scheme—known as the Trinidad terms—proposed by the United Kingdom which would improve on the Toronto package by reducing in one stroke the stock of eligible debt by two thirds instead of one third, with repayments on the remaining debt spread over 25 years.

Because external debt is hampering Africa's capacity to engineer economic recovery, Pérez de Cuéllar proposed the cancellation of all official bilateral debt and stepped-up efforts to substantially reduce multilateral debt. He also called for the writing down of commercial debts, which were already highly discounted on the financial markets, at commensurate rates and the buying back of the remainder through donor supported initiatives, including various swap options. These measures received the support of the Organization of African Unity.

According to Gert Rosenthal, executive secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), over-indebtedness persists throughout the region and efforts to reduce official and private debt have been "slow and inadequate". ECLAC estimated that the accumulation of arrears in the servicing of the external debt would reach $25 billion by the end of 1991.

Latin America

A small group of middle-income countries in Latin America—notably, Chile, Mexico and Venezuela—are emerging from their debt crisis by negotiating commercial bank debt reduction, often with official support, and are gaining access once again to commercial credit markets.

But according to the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) in its year-end global economic update, this return to the capital markets, while indicating new confidence among lenders and borrowers alike, is very limited. In fact, according to DIESA, Asian borrowers accounted for almost 80 per cent of developing country bank loans and bond issues while African nations remain isolated. Because most countries will have to rely on financing by the multilateral financial institutions, DIESA recommends that capital funds, such as the International Monetary Fund and the International Finance Corporation, step up the expansion of their lending resources available to developing countries.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which has urged an overall debt reduction of 30 per cent as the centrepiece of the international debt strategy, sees present efforts such as the Brady Plan as falling far short of the needs of developing countries. In anticipation of the upcoming UNCTAD VIII conference in February, Kenneth K.S. Dadzie, its secretary-general, calls for a much stronger Brady plan in which "the negotiation process between debtor countries and commercial banks would be anchored on the estimate of a country's actual debt reduction and cash-flow needs rather than the balance of negotiating strength." He cited that the recent decisions to reduce the official bilateral debt of Egypt and Poland by at least 50 per cent would provide the guidelines for negotiations with other countries. ■

UNCTAD ready for February conference

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will be holding its eighth session in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 8 to 25 February. The conference, entitled "Accelerating the Development Process: Challenges for National and International Development Policies in the 1990s", will focus on five agenda items including resources for development, international trade, technology, services and commodities.

The institutional role of UNCTAD, which seeks to make the international trading system more responsive to the developing countries, will also be reviewed in light of the changing international economic and political environment. The Group of 77, the group of 128 developing countries, has met several times in recent months preparing the working document for UNCTAD VIII. The Geneva-based intergovernmental body holds these meetings every four years.

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The rocky road to Rio

By Bill Hinchberger

With the Earth Summit less than six months away, nowhere are preparations for the global meeting and awareness of it greater than in Brazil, the country which has undertaken the daunting task of hosting the United Nations conference.

The country's leading newspapers run stories daily, not only about government efforts costing millions of dollars to spruce up Rio de Janeiro but also about preparations for both the official United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the parallel gathering organized by activist groups.

As a result, the meeting has attracted the intense interest of local non-governmental development organizations (NGOs) that might otherwise ignore an international meeting with what appears to be a predominantly environmental focus.

Brazilian NGOs face the same conflicts being stirred up in other countries, only they are in the spotlight.

Credited with encouraging some of their more traditional Northern counterparts to take a harder look at the social ramifications of the environment/development dichotomy, Brazilian NGOs are finding that their own heterogeneous make-up can also prove a hindrance to the pragmatic logistics of preparing for the parallel NGO gathering and lobbying the official gathering of government delegations and heads of state.

While few would have predicted perfect harmony among the multifaceted "independent sectors" (mostly NGOs, but also labour unions and some business groups), many Brazilian activists complain that internal infighting is overshadowing what should be the central preparatory tasks.

The Brazilian NGO Forum, the umbrella group of over 800 organizations gearing up for UNCED, is co-ordinating the activities of the country's NGOs and labour groups. Business has its own structure, notably the Business Council for Sustainable Development, though some local executives have access through environmental NGOs.

Environment vs. development split

Some conflicts mirror those being stirred up in other countries. For instance, the now classic duel between "social developmentalists" and traditional environmentalists. In Brazil, the first casualty of this battle was the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE), a left-leaning think-tank, which

Richard B. Mock

recently resigned from the Forum's directorate. "We consider this a false conflict," says IBASE director Herbert de Souza. "And since we believe the environmentalist/development fight will lead nowhere, we would prefer to keep our distance."

IBASE, de Souza adds, continues to play a central role in developing electronic communications systems for both the official and parallel events, and in carrying out issue-related studies.

Complicating matters, small volunteer NGOs are trying to keep up with their well-funded (generally from foreign sources), professionalized peers. Established groups complain over the large role that has been given to NGOs they consider relative novices. They cite the often unsuccessful efforts by local single-issue groups to tackle a wide range of international concerns. Volunteer NGOs counter that they are being swept along, their input often ignored, by the well-established professionals.

In a time of economic crisis, big NGOs are trying to expand their activities around UNCED precisely as financial resources are drying up. "They're racing after funding. It's a war," observes Albina Cusmanich, representative of the volunteer Os Verdes, part of Rio de Janeiro's Permanent Assembly of Environmental Groups (APEBEMA-RJ), of her more well-heeled colleagues.

Foreign funding is itself a source of concern for some. "Our position is that the most representative groups are the small, self-sustaining ones," offers federal deputy Sidney de Miguel of the Green Party. "The five-star NGOs are linked to the ecological programme of the rich countries' sustainable development. They ignore potential solutions that would reduce production but guarantee life."

The growing role of mass-based social and labour organizations is becoming increasingly polemical. Joao Paulo Capobianco, one of the Forum's directors and head of SOS Atlantic Forest, a mainstream group struggling to preserve what's left of coastal forests in south-central Brazil, estimates that NGOs with strictly environmental concerns have gradually lost their majority in the Forum.

The smouldering debate burst forth publicly following an extended meeting of the Forum in Sao Paulo in September. Federal deputy Fabio Feldman, a leading environmental advocate in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, was quoted in the daily *Folha de São Paulo* as saying that the movement was in danger of becoming dominated by organizations linked to political parties.

Veteran environmentalist Magda Renner and Giselda Castro, president and vice-president, respectively, of the Brazilian chapter of the Friends of the Earth, echo Feldman's concerns. They said that they support a social component in the environmental picture, but complained that top ecologists were passed over in favour of representatives of groups like the Street Children's Movement when Brazilians chose their 25-member delegation for the December international NGO meeting in Paris, France.

Delegate selections reflected a unique quota system that reserved one-third of the positions for each of three categories: environmentalists, development groups, and groups concerned with social issues. The quotas were also designed to ensure the representation of women, blacks, indigenous people, and individuals from various regions of the continent-sized country of 150 million.

Though a source of conflict, the selection controversy is not uniquely Brazilian. In fact, it symbolizes tensions that lie below the surface in many countries where delegate selection to preparatory meetings has been hotly disputed.

Population issue

Another sensitive issue, population control, breaks down to a battle between eco-feminists and traditional environmentalists. "When they get together, it's like oil and water," observes activist Cusmanich. Thais Corral, a Brazilian member of the steering committee of the eco-feminists' International Policy Action Committee, argues that the population control debate not only exhibits an anti-South thrust, but "that feminists believe it is dangerous" because women are usually made the subjects, often unwillingly, of population control efforts. Not surprisingly, this issue is a sticking point among Northern and Southern governments as well.

Among NGOs, at least, Capobianco downplays the friction. "The Forum consists of non-profits," he says. "If a group wants to change to include an environmental component, I think that's positive. Opportunism is when companies try to paint themselves green."

Amid the tension, Brazilian NGOs are assuming many of the responsibilities for parallel "alternative UNCED". Over 100 events are already scheduled, though the number could shoot up to around 500 by summit time. The purposes, say activists, are to monitor and lobby official UNCED, while simultaneously providing an outlet for protest and criticism. Eco-feminists, just to provide one example, plan a march through city streets.

Logistics planning is behind schedule, most activists agree, and high capacity meeting space for plenary sessions may prove scarce. All

told, 7,000-10,000 "independent sector" representatives from around the world are expected in Rio de Janeiro, even though just 350 NGOs will be officially credentialed by UNCED.

North-South divide

Early on, the parallel gathering was opposed by groups planning to be among that select 350, including NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations. They urged other NGOs to channel their input through those with consultative status.

By virtue of their longevity, the bulk of the NGOs with consultative status hail from Northern countries, and Southerners balked at the suggestion that they step aside. Capobianco relates that the conflict has been amicably resolved. "The relation of forces has changed," he says. "Any NGO can request credentials to the PrepCom [the pre-summit planning meetings]." Renner and Castro of the Brazilian Friends of the Earth remark that their Northern colleagues have been generous with advice on how to attain consultative status.

Most Brazilian environmentalists and social activists have histories as progressive activists, and many are highly critical of official government policies.

The Green Party's de Miguel takes a similar stand. "[Brazilian president] Fernando Collor de Mello is no ecologist, but he has brought some ecologists into the government"—citing environmental secretary José Lutzenberger and Sidney Possuelo, the official in

Over 100 events are already scheduled, though the number could shoot up to around 500 by summit time.

charge of Indian policy. "If Collor gains prestige for doing good things, we aren't going to stand against it," says the federal deputy.

De Miguel believes that the government is susceptible to the environmentalist lobby, mentioning the elimination of the indiscriminate pro-development policy in the Amazon and the demarcation of Yanomami Indian territory as two significant steps. The 1992 summit is also producing a direct benefit in environmental policy: an area contaminated with hazardous waste in the greater Rio de Janeiro region will be cleaned up prior to UNCED. A government official told the local press: "We can't host [UNCED] with this problem unsolved."

NGO activists agree a myriad of other problems remain unsolved as the meeting date creeps closer. But most subscribe to de Souza's perspective: "When the time comes, everything will work out. But under deadline pressure. It will be by virtue of improvisation rather than systematic planning." ■

Bill Hinchberger lives in São Paulo, Brazil. He is associate editor of the reference book Third World Guide: 1991-92.

High expectations raise pressure on Earth Summit

By Michael McCoy

No one said the road leading to the Earth Summit would be easy. During the planning process for every large United Nations conference—on disarmament, women, population, food, etc.—the government delegates, Secretariat staff, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the press often go through what might be called a common case of pre-conference anxiety and depression.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) is no exception. Perhaps all of the above participants are facing the very sobering reality of the huge amount of work that still lies ahead of them with less than six months to go before the Earth Summit. Secretariat staff estimate that the documents that need to be ready for Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) IV in March, for example, will total some 2,000 pages and have to be translated into the six official languages. Then there will be the new draft text created during the five-week meeting of the final PrepCom in New York.

Organizers are worried that the governments of the South and the North are still far apart on crucial issues.

Organizers are also worried that the governments of the South and the North are still far apart on such crucial questions as transfer of technology (what kinds of technology to be transferred from the North to the South, and under what kind of concessional terms), and where "new and additional" financial resources will come from.

However, despite these formidable obstacles, there are several reasons to be hopeful that the conclusions of the Earth Summit in Rio will have moved the international community a considerable distance forward in achieving a greater level of sustainability in our environmental and development policies.

The first reason, and probably most important: the exercise has given long-overdue legitimacy to those visionary grassroots activists, academics, scientists, feminists and bureaucrats who have been saying for several decades that any process of economic development, North and South, must now meet agreed standards of sustainability; for this there is wide agreement, but like reversing the direction of an ocean liner mid-course, it takes quite some time and patience to achieve.

Second, the UNCED process is having the beneficial side-effect of accelerating the pace at which economically and environmentally sustainable public policy and standards are being considered and/or implemented at the local, regional, state and provincial levels, as well as at the national and international levels.

Meanwhile, during the debate and government negotiations over the agenda of UNCED, the sessions of the Preparatory Committee over the past year have brought to the surface issues that have not been dealt with in a straightforward manner by the international community since the unresolved debate over the creation of a still-born new international economic order (NIEO) in the mid-seventies. Also, at no time since the NIEO debate, which attempted to redress the economic and trade grievances of the developing nations, have governments of the South felt that they have as much clout at the negotiating table with Northern governments as they now have in UNCED.

Diplomatic time warp

An irony of the present Earth Summit negotiations is that the contentious debate on the central issues dividing the North and South—transfer of technology, the need for new and additional flow of resources to the South, the delicate balance between a country's accountability to multilateral donors and national sovereignty; universal environmental standards as they relate to trade, and the establishment of global mechanisms to assure global sustainability after the Earth Summit—is taking place as if it were 1975, rather than 1992.

This lack of attention to creative alternatives, and lack of thoughtful and well-analysed proposals from individual governments might be an indication that the issues of environment and development may not be a very high political priority back in the national capitals. Or is it because many of the delegates are of that age and generation, frozen in a 20-year-old time warp? Are they also too wedded to the present structures of power and wealth in their own countries that they are unable to represent other sectors of their national polity such as the many social movements and citizen organizations that are calling for popular citizen participation and a democratization of political and economic decision making at all levels in countries both North and South?

Concrete results from Rio

The contrast between the early expectations for the Earth Summit and those of the participating parties at this stage of negotiations are reflected by the few specific results that can be expected from UNCED, as opposed to the blue-sky predictions of one year ago. For example, the Earth Charter, or what is now being referred to as the "Rio de Janeiro Charter on Environment and Development", will be one document that the heads of state will be able to sign when they gather in Rio in June. The structure and outline of Agenda 21, which is the international community's "Plan of Action" for governments and the United Nations system after the Earth Summit, will have been completed, but all parties agree that the work of filling out the details and substance of the specific recommendations for action will, by necessity, have to continue long after the Summit itself.

Richard B. Mock

In the months before PrepCom IV, governments are reviewing all points now included in Agenda 21, identifying where the gaps are, and costing out existing programme areas such as forests, climate, toxic wastes, biotechnology, biodiversity, oceans, fresh water, etc. The only two issues from this list where the documentation process has been completed in draft are on oceans and fresh water. Government delegates will then bring their conclusions regarding their views on Agenda 21 to the meetings of the plenary during PrepCom IV.

Climate change

It is expected that a climate change convention will be ready for signing in Rio, although it has been temporarily stalled over the targets to be set for the allowable carbon emissions for each country by the year 2000. Several (industrialized) countries from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and United States NGOs are trying to encourage the United States to give up its lone opposition on this issue.

Financial flows

The negotiations over new and additional resources for assuring global sustainability continues to be the central point of disagreement between the Group of 77 (the South) and member countries of OECD, or the North. The Japanese government intends to host a meeting to discuss this item in April, in hopes that such an informal meeting may yet help to further the negotiations on this issue after PrepCom IV and before the Earth Summit.

The negotiations on financial flows continue to be seriously deadlocked. If there is no forward movement by Northern governments soon on indicating a specific amount of new resources, the government of Malaysia has suggested that it will not take part in the Earth Summit next June. If Malaysia withdraws, it could begin to unravel the present universal and participatory nature of the Earth Summit.

One area of the UNCED negotiations where the South has been able to set the terms for the negotiations is in setting the structure and organization of Agenda 21, which is largely based on the Group of 77 draft proposal. For example, each of the areas under consideration within Agenda 21 is required to include ways and means that "new and additional financial resources" will be generated to implement each part of the plan of action.

Also, it was agreed that each programme area would consider the following: poverty; economic growth and the environment; demographic pressures and unsustainable consumption patterns and environment; international trade environment; external indebtedness; resource flows and environment; and, finally, large industrial enterprises, including transnational corporations, business practices and environment.

Change of priorities

Recognizing that the issues that require most of the attention of delegations are those that have been discussed in Working Group III and in plenary, the schedule for the five-week PrepCom IV may well be changed to reflect these priorities. According to delegation sources, the PrepCom will attempt to conclude negotiations on issues such as oceans, forests, toxic wastes, sustainable agriculture, etc. (those that have been the responsibility of Working Groups I and II) by the end of the first week, 2-6 March 1992. With the work of Working Groups I and II completed, the remaining four weeks could then be divided between meetings of Working Group III and the plenary.

During this past session of the United Nations General Assembly, a briefing on UNCED was held for General Assembly delegates, NGOs and the press. Members of the UNCED secretariat were among those answering the questions. One very central question that articulated one of the main challenges for the Earth Summit was asked by Everton Varges from the Brazilian delegation, concerning the distribution of burden sharing between the North and the South in covering the necessary costs to assure global sustainability. In UNCED negotiations thus far, the primary weight of burden sharing appears to be on the people, communities and governments of the South. Varges pointed out that the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions was one area where the North proposes to carry the heavier burden. However, he asked, what about the necessary changes in lifestyles and "unsustainable" consumption patterns in the North? Why hasn't a substantive discussion of these issues been more central to the UNCED agenda? The answer was that there continues to be very difficult obstacles in Northern societies to achieving significant reductions in consumption and changes in lifestyles. That may be true, but aren't the domestic political challenges just as difficult or even more so in the South?

Deflating expectations

With all the hyperbole and boosterism with which UNCED was launched, it would be inevitable that governments, NGOs, the press and the public would develop unreasonably high expectations that would have to be, by necessity, lowered for such a complex and groundbreaking enterprise as UNCED.

Perhaps, now, the Earth Summit can be seen for what it is, a government conference of the United Nations with all the problems, complexity and challenges that are represented in any other United Nations conference. Martin Khor Pen, of the Malaysian-based NGO Third World Network (TWN), perhaps summed up best the challenges to the governments of the North and the South at the Earth Summit in a recent issue of TWN's publication, *Third World Resurgence*, when he said "for the rest of the 'Road to Rio' the negotiating impasses can be best broken if the North starts talking economics and the South responds more on ecology." Not a bad idea, but only likely in the Earth Summit of our dreams. ■

Michael McCoy is director of the United States-based Center for Citizen Advocacy, and is Development Forum's special correspondent for the Earth Summit.

NGOs prepare for final PrepCom

New York—From 2 March to 3 April the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) moves to its fourth and last session at United Nations Headquarters here. The non-governmental organization (NGO) community, North and South, recognizes that this will be the last opportunity to influence, to any realistic extent, the decisions of governments as they determine the final agenda of the Earth Summit in Rio.

However, many of the UNCED delegates' meetings during the New York PrepCom will be taking place in what are called "informals", meetings that are often closed by the working group chairs to NGO representatives. This will no doubt be disappointing to the approximately 500 accredited NGOs that expect to cover the UNCED PrepCom. With this in mind, NGO activists will be planning numerous parallel activities, including issue-focused workshops, briefings, smaller conferences, and possibly several public demonstrations over the five-week PrepCom.

NGOs also see the New York PrepCom as an excellent opportunity to continue to develop a people's, or social movements', agenda for achieving sustainability in the years following the Earth Summit, so that no matter what happens or does not happen in the formal government conference in Rio, the NGOs will have planned their own forums to develop common international strategies for global, regional, national and community-based action.

The Sustainable Development Committee of CONGO (made up of NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council) has agreed to play a central facilitating role during the March PrepCom. Also, the United States citizens' Network on UNCED will maintain an office in New York from December through the end of March to deal with the inevitable influx of American NGOs.

Several other international and Southern NGO networks will maintain PrepCom offices, including the Environmental Liaison Centre International, the Third World Network, and the Northern Peoples Alliance on Environment and Development.

No doubt for both NGOs and government delegations, the Fourth PrepCom of UNCED will prove to be a necessary dress rehearsal for what we can expect at the Earth Summit this June in Rio!

For accreditation and other information on PrepCom IV, write to Yolanda Kakabatse, UNCED Secretariat, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, before 21 February 1992.
M.M.

After Rio:

Environmental education's new role

By Adelaide Kernochan

Richard B. Mock

As the organizers of the Earth Summit begin to look beyond the meeting in Rio, greater attention is being given to the role of education in sustaining long-term environmental and development efforts. The educational programme proposed in a report of the secretary-general of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) differs surprisingly from traditional formal education or even from the life-long learning programme accepted at the benchmark Jomtien conference on education for all in 1990.

The UNCED proposal combines teaching about environment and development (heretofore treated as alternate approaches to international education) and focuses on the Earth Summit's central question: how can growing numbers of people lead decent lives without destroying the earth's limited resources on which all life depends?

Exploring this question requires a realism largely absent from today's educational programmes. Instead of learning only about the past from books and audiovisual materials, children will examine firsthand what is actually happening now to the resources in their own community.

They will also see how people are coping with today's global realities: the population explosion, urbanization, industrialization, unemployment and other economic and social ills. They will learn that our present ways of developing can affect how people may be able to live in the next century. This education must help them to honestly "face the facts": the world's future is in doubt.

According to the report, this new education must also be positive and empowering. It speaks of "education for achievement . . . in a world where change is the order of the day." Pupils will be taught scientific and technological skills needed for understanding the ecosystem and for promoting economic growth and raising the quality of life. They will become "responsible for their own achievements, able to appraise their performances and to subdivide their work into attainable outcomes".

Education today, however, must "balance mandates for change with the need for continuity. . . Formal education has always had the main responsibility for passing on to succeeding generations the wisdom . . . and experience of the past." This "stabilizing influence" is especially needed in societies subject to modern stress. Education for sustainable development can give young people a sense of environmental responsibility and a commitment to bettering their communities. This can be demonstrated in their behaviour, choice of lifestyles and participation in social action. In short, such education should develop ethical values and the qualities and habits of good "earth citizens".

Baltic Sea initiative

The educational approach tentatively outlined by UNCED is certainly ambitious. Schools and youth groups in different parts of the world, however, have begun to experiment along these lines. One of the prototypes being gathered for presentation in Rio is one remarkable initiative—the Baltic Sea Project (BSP)*—which embodies all the UNCED proposals. Although its goals, scope, focus and organization are unusually ambitious and creative, its elements could be applied anywhere in the world.

BSP is being jointly developed by 150 institutions in the nine nations which share the heavily polluted Baltic Sea "catchment" area (Finland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden). Co-ordinated by Finland, the project forms part of the programmes of two networks of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) devoted to bettering education: the Associated Schools Project and the International Network for Information in Science and Technology Education.

BSP's goals are to awaken young people's interest, concern and sense of responsibility for growing environmental problems relating to the Baltic Sea; to teach them to work in international co-operation in diminishing these problems; and to create "school-specific models" for countries with common educational concerns.

Instead of planning the project from the top down and using a common curriculum, BSP encourages experimentation by individual teachers in different disciplines, different levels and different kinds of schools in varied localities. Each chooses ways to interpret the project according to the specific local situation.

Education for sustainable development gives students a sense of environmental responsibility and commitment to bettering their communities.

The work is proceeding in three increasingly co-ordinated stages: local research, sharing findings, and taking action. In the first stage, pupils go out into their own home environments and research how sea and natural resources are being affected by population density, industrialization, navigation and tourism.

Local to global

The schools also begin a partnership with community people interested in environment and development, as recommended in the UNCED report. Pupils work with zoological, maritime and agricultural organizations as well as town and landscape planners, historians, indigenous peoples, sociologists and many others.

In the second stage, participants learn about the global nature of environment and development through practicing regional co-operation. Pedagogical experiments are shared through the BSP newsletter and frequent national and regional meetings. Pupils use common chemical and physical measurements, pooled and analysed, to develop a picture of the Baltic as a whole. School twinning and exchanges are encouraged.

By the third stage, pupils should have developed two basic understandings: that environmental distress is caused by humans and can only be remedied by humans and that the problems of environment and development extend beyond national borders and must be dealt with in co-operation with other countries. Their work culminates in both local and regional action to "influence the situation".

Some action is personal, such as not wasting paper or other resources, shopping carefully or adopting ecologically sensitive patterns of behaviour or lifestyles. School groups keep beaches free of trash, recycle garbage or plant and care for seedlings where acid rain has destroyed Northern forests.

Other projects

BSP participants also hope to inspire educators beyond their region. The North and Mediterranean Seas Projects have already begun and regional schools plan to restore the Blue Danube river. In time for the Rio conference, the educational findings are being gathered into a collection of practical examples and tips for teachers worldwide. Hopefully the guide will convey the spirit of shared concern, excitement and satisfaction at the work done together.

This success is largely due to the teachers' sensitive and creative planning and to the active roles played at all stages by the participating pupils. They have done more than read about environment and development. They have had the chance to leave the classroom, to study reality and to make use of their knowledge. They devise their own questions, construct their own scientific equipment, conduct their own experiments and interviews and draft their own reports and recommendations. They are learning to learn.

Liisa Jasskelainen, co-ordinator of the Finnish BSP and responsible for environmental and international education in general education in Finland, says that one of the most difficult problems in teaching about environment and development is that people feel overwhelmed and helpless. "The children who participate in the BSP are happy to find that they are not alone with their anxieties about the future. They discover that they can break the vicious cycle of powerlessness . . . The more they help create a healthy environment in the Baltic, the more they are eager to learn." This encouragement of youths' knowledge and commitment will determine much of what happens to UNCED's Earth Charter and Agenda 21 in the coming decades. ■

Adelaide Kernochan frequently writes on education for Development Forum.

***Teaching about Environment and Development,** a secondary-school teaching guide in an ongoing educational series devoted to environmental problems from a United Nations perspective, contains background information plus simple stories, case studies, interviews and classroom exercises. The guide may be used with **About the United Nations: Environment and Development**, a 15-minute video for secondary schools. Sustainable development—the Baltic Sea Project and reforestry in Thailand. Both are available together or separately from: United Nations Publications, Sales Section, 2 United Nations Plaza, DC2-853, Dept. 527, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, United States.

For more details on the Baltic Sea Project, write to: Editors, *Baltic Sea Project Newsletter*, Hakaniemenkatu 2, 00530 Helsinki, Suomi-Finland.

For further information on UNCED and education, contact Sharon Duguid, associate advisor, External Relations Unit, UNCED Secretariat, Case Postale 80, CH-1231 Conches, Switzerland. Tel. 41-22/789 1676.

Rio education workshop

As part of the parallel Earth Summit in Rio, an International Workshop on Environmental Education will be held on 4 and 5 June, bringing together experts, representatives from governments and non-governmental organizations, school teachers and the public at large at the Rio de Janeiro Federal University.

The event aims to provide an opportunity for participants involved with environmental education (EE) to discuss its current status in their countries. It also expects to adopt an international framework of action which will provide advice on the preparation, execution, monitoring and evaluation of EE programmes.

Those interested in the workshop should contact:

In Great Britain: Monica Hale, 10 York Road, Sutton, Surrey, United Kingdom. Fax: +44-81-643-04-39.

Elsewhere: Walter Leal Filho, University of Hamburg, Institute of International Comparative Education, Sedanstrasse 19, D-2000 Hamburg 13, Germany. Fax: +49-40-4123-62-47 or +49-40-4123-45-82.

Information on accommodation can be obtained from: Global Forum Office, Hotel Gloria, Predio Anexo, sala 366, Rua do Russel 632, CEP 22212, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Tel: +55-21-556-30-30. Fax: +55-21-205-41-14.

Asia overtaking Africa in AIDS cases

By Ramon Isberto

Manila—Despite the intense concern over the spread of AIDS in Africa, the World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that Asia will soon overtake that region with the largest number of infected persons.

At least 1.5 million people have already been infected with the AIDS virus in South and South-East Asia and the number is rising rapidly as the disease spreads increasingly through heterosexual contact which WHO says is the predominant mode of transmission.

By the mid- to the late 1990s, WHO says more Asians will be infected each year than Africans. So far, sub-Saharan Africa has suffered most from the global AIDS pandemic with over 7 million adults and children infected.

WHO's announcement of the grimmer scenario for Asia coincided with World AIDS Day on 1 December. It included dark forecasts for the global AIDS picture.

WHO said that the number of AIDS cases worldwide will rise tenfold over the next eight years, from about 1.5 million to 12-18 million by the year 2000.

Over the same period, the total number of people infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which causes AIDS will triple or quadruple, from 9-11 million to 30-40 million.

"A challenge of this magnitude cannot be met by any one community, country or organization in isolation," WHO director-general Hiroshi Nakajima said.

In Asia, the AIDS threat looms largest in India and Thailand, where HIV infections have been increasing at an alarming rate.

New Delhi has reported there may already be as many as one million infected persons. WHO notes with concern that India's population of sexually active adults is two and a half times bigger than the total population of sub-Saharan Africa.

FACT

The good news *is that many Asian NGOs have started creative AIDS education campaigns, such as this dramatic presentation in Bangkok, Thailand, aimed at sex workers.*

WHO's chief epidemiologist James Chin says "5 to 10 million people in India and several million in Thailand are likely to be infected by the AIDS virus by the year 2000."

In Thailand, official estimates put the number of HIV carriers at about 550,000 out of a population of 55 million. Experts say that Bangkok's AIDS crisis is almost as bad as some central African countries.

Unlike Africa, it appeared in the early stages of the pandemic in Asia that the AIDS threat was confined to fringe social groups such as homosexuals or drug addicts.

Bangkok's first identified AIDS case in 1984, for example, was a Thai homosexual who had been living in the United States.

Fed by the hugely profitable illegal trade in heroin coming from the "Golden Triangle" region in Burma, Laos and Thailand, intravenous drug abuse also helped spread the AIDS virus in Asia.

In both Thailand and India, the disease has apparently spread through extensive prostitution networks. In the case of India, the mass prostitution dens of Bombay and Calcutta threaten to scatter the AIDS virus to neighbouring Nepal.

There are an estimated 100,000 young Nepali girls in the red light districts of major Indian cities. They bring back the AIDS virus on their return to Nepal, where there is virtually no screening for HIV infection.

Given worldwide trends which show seven out of 10 persons are infected through heterosexual contact, WHO now stresses that AIDS is largely a sexually transmitted disease.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is supporting WHO's Global AIDS Programme to help control the epidemic and collect data on the spread of the virus.

WHO is currently helping four developing countries—Brazil, Rwanda, Thailand and Uganda—to improve their capacity to test anti-AIDS vaccines by providing laboratory equipment and training for scientists.

The four countries were selected as vaccine trial sites by the Steering Committee on Vaccine Development of WHO's Global Programme on AIDS, which is composed of international experts in vaccine development. It made its decision based on the following criteria: the current and projected epidemiological characteristics of HIV infection; the potential of the existing laboratory and clinical infrastructure to support vaccine trials; the presence of trained national scientists to conduct vaccine trials; and other criteria such as the existence of national review procedures for ethical and scientific integrity of research proposals. Other sites in other countries may be selected in the future.

"Testing of HIV vaccines in developing countries will accelerate the development of appropriate HIV vaccines where the need is greatest," says Michael Merson, director of WHO's Global Programme on AIDS. "Should effective HIV vaccines be developed, WHO is committed to doing all it can to ensure their availability worldwide."

Accordingly, WHO representatives have begun discussions with vaccine manufacturers through the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association to explore ways in which WHO and vaccine manufacturers can collaborate in vaccine development and plan for eventual worldwide availability of HIV vaccines. ■

IPS

The facts

Aids cases

- **Countries reporting AIDS cases :163**
- **Reported AIDS cases worldwide : 371,802**
- **Estimated AIDS cases worldwide : 1.5 million**
- **Of 1.5 million estimated AIDS cases, one third in children**

HIV-infected people

- **Estimated no. of people infected worldwide: 9-11 million**
- **Of estimated HIV-positive people: more than 3 million women and 1 million children**
- **Average time from diagnosis to death in developed countries: 1-2 years**
- **Average time from diagnosis to death in developing countries: 6-12 months**
- **Median incubation time from probable time of infection to AIDS: 10 years**

Projections

- **By 1995: 10-20 million new infections**
- **By 2000: 30-40 million people will have been infected with HIV**
  - **-90% in developing countries**
  - **-25% will be children**
  - **-up to 10 million people will have been diagnosed with AIDS**
  - **-80% of HIV infections will result from heterosexual transmission**

PANOS 28

Source: World Health Organisation

Malaria: Progress on new drugs

By Gamini Seneviratne

Two anti-malaria drugs, one an ancient remedy, are being prepared for worldwide distribution by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the ongoing campaign against the persistent disease.

Malaria has experienced a resurgence and is more virulent and widespread than ever. Some 300 million people in 102 countries are said to be infected through mosquito bites. In October, WHO said 110 million clinical cases occur every year and put the annual death toll at over one million persons. According to WHO the disease has developed more severe forms with "increasing numbers of complicated and serious cases, particularly of cerebral malaria which damages the brain."

The drugs which WHO is trying to make available are based on the natural compound artemisinin, which Chinese scientists isolated from the plant *Artemisia annua*, in 1972. Chinese records of traditional medicine going back over 2000 years prescribe a tea, brewed from its leaves, as a remedy for chills and fevers associated with malaria.

When WHO officials first became aware of the drug in 1979, Chinese scientists had developed derivatives of artemisinin, which is difficult to handle pharmaceutically, and produced two injectable drugs that are now registered and widely used (two million doses a year) in China.

The Geneva-based United Nations body has been helping the main Chinese manufacturer of one of them, an intramuscular injectable in a peanut oil vehicle called Arte-mether, to get its production process to conform with WHO Good Manufacturing Practices and so qualify for international marketing registration. Clinical trials outside China will start soon in Kenya, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Viet Nam.

On a second front, WHO has promoted the development of a closely related intramuscular injectable called Arte-ether. This work has been done entirely outside China. All the laboratory tests have now been completed at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington, DC, United States.

The first of three clinical trials—on 23 young, healthy, male volunteers—started in November at Amsterdam University's Department of Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine, and will continue for at least two months. WHO says all trials could be completed by 1993. ■

Gamini Seneviratne, based in Vienna, is a Sri Lankan journalist specializing in development and energy issues.

Concern over Eastern Europe

Continued from page 1

these difficult transitions be made "with a human face", which requires the sustained assistance of the international community.

In both transitional processes, "adjustment" has involved spending cuts and the withdrawal of subsidies on food and other essentials. And in both, the capacity of families to meet the needs by their own efforts has been undermined by unemployment, falling incomes and rising prices. At the same time, cuts in social services have weakened the "safety nets" just when the strain on them was increasing.

There is no underestimating the wrenching impact of economic decline on these societies. According to a report by the Geneva-based United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), economic output in Eastern Europe will plunge by almost 15 per cent in 1991, bringing the decline in production to almost 25 per cent over three years.

ECE warned that the transition process in Eastern and Central Europe was going to be a lengthy one, continuing in some countries over several decades and requiring long-term commitment by those who wish its success. It also predicted further declines in output and increased social unrest during 1992.

Unemployment in Hungary, UNICEF points out, increased tenfold between late 1989 and May 1991. In Poland, the unemployment figure at the end of 1991 was expected to be two million—almost 15 per cent of the labour force. Czechoslovakia expects half a million unemployed by the end of 1992. For those who have work, incomes have fallen steeply. Average real incomes in Poland fell by 25 per cent in the first nine months of 1990. In Bulgaria, the fall has been nearer 50 per cent. In Czechoslovakia, the number of officially poor was expected to quadruple in 1991. In Poland and the USSR, 40 per cent now live below the official poverty line.

Cutting subsidies has changed relative prices and many families are now spending 50-60 per cent of income on food alone. The consumption of bread, milk and other basic foods is known to have declined in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, the USSR and Yugoslavia. In Albania—the worst case—approximately 20 per cent of all children are now malnourished, and infant mortality is more than double its 1989 level of 15 per 1,000 births.

"Social income" has also declined. Minimum wages, unemployment benefits, child allowances, old-age pensions and disability pay have been theoretically maintained, but in practice they have been pared away by inflation. Companies have also abandoned welfare services formerly provided to employees' families. Czechoslovakia cut spending on health by 20 per cent in 1990 and on education by 10 per cent in each of the last two years.

In part, the inadequacy of social safety nets is a result of miscalculations about the weight they would have to bear. Poland, for example, planned for unemployment rising to 400,000 and incomes falling by 5-10 per cent: in the event, unemployment rose to 1.4 million by December 1990 and average incomes fell by 27 per cent.

The worst human consequences could almost certainly have been avoided. Unfortunately, there are signs that the baby of minimum welfare measures is being thrown out with the bath water of state control, the UNICEF report argues.

Reasonable indexing of benefits, sensitive monitoring of changes in child well-being, careful targeting of available resources, free school meals, food stamps to ensure minimum nutritional standards and the maintenance of basic health and education services—all of these could have protected the most vulnerable, and especially the children, as Eastern Europe makes its brave transition to democratic politics and free-market economies.

As in the developing world, the rich nations could play a specific role by helping to maintain minimum standards of health and nutrition at a time when governments are having acute difficulty in doing so. In other words, international aid could help to uphold the principle of "first call" by making sure that children do not suffer most in times of turbulence and transition. And in doing so, it would also help to ensure that long-term progress is not undermined by short-term exigencies.

The State of the World's Children 1992 emphasizes the rapid and profound changes taking place not only in Central and Eastern Europe, but in Asia, Africa and Latin America as well. Recognizing that Asia has endured the international economic downturn better than others, it notes that the largest concentration of poor people is in Asia.

It also specifically appealed that Africa's debt burden be further reduced if the economic adjustments that many countries have imposed are to have lasting positive effects.

Similarly, while most of Latin America has moved towards democracy over the past decade, most nations are still far from meeting the minimal needs for the well-being of families. UNICEF has promised that it will not reduce its input into these regions despite the new demands for funding in Eastern Europe. ■

State of the World's Children 1992

The State of the World's Children 1992, published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has made its own propositions for the emerging "new world order". "Taken together," says its executive director James Grant, "these add up to a proposal that ending the absolute poverty of one fifth of mankind—the more than one billion people who still live and die with preventable hunger, disease and illiteracy—should rank alongside the related issues of preserving the peace and protecting the environment as priority items on the agenda of that new world order." Among UNICEF's 10 propositions:

- That the growing consensus around the importance of market economic policies be accompanied by a corresponding consensus on the responsibility of governments to guarantee basic investments in people.
- That increases in international aid be based on a commitment to meeting minimum human needs and for maintaining, in difficult times, the principle of a first call for children.
- That international action on debt, aid and trade should create an environment in which economic reform in the developing world can succeed in allowing its people to earn a decent living.
- That a process of demilitarization should begin in the developing world and that, simultaneously, falling military expenditures in the industrialized nations should be linked to significant increases in international aid for development and for the resolution of common global problems.
- That Africa's debt be written off and that the continent be given sufficient external support to allow internal reform to succeed in regenerating the momentum of development.

A copy of The State of the World's Children 1992 *may be obtained from UNICEF, UNICEF House, 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, United States, or UNICEF, Palais des Nations, CH 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.*

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World Bank/Ray Witlin

An economic downturn *in India has meant no jobs for citizens returning from Persian Gulf states.*

Indians line up for return to Kuwait

By Bishakha Datta and Christine Hawkins

Bombay—After Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, some 176,000 Indians who were working in Kuwait fled the country and returned to their home towns. Today almost every one of them is in the queue for another Gulf job: 10,000 have already returned to Kuwait.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 800,000 of the roughly three million Asians working in the Gulf were Indian. Collectively they sent $2 billion in official remittances each year to their families. Unofficial remittances, according to one source, might be three times as much.

In Lunawada, in the western Indian state of Gujarat, about 4,500 of the town's 30,000 residents migrated to the Gulf in the last decade, almost half of them working in Kuwait. Upon their return, they became comrades in unemployment, idling about Lunawada's marketplace all day.

Lunawada offers few opportunities for employment. Although it is just three hours from a city, it has no industry. The nearest train station is an hour away; the power and water supplies are erratic. Most residents make a living farming, running small shops or teaching at nearby schools.

Such occupations have never generated sufficient incomes, particularly for the Muslims, who form 30 per cent of the town's population. They do not practice family planning and their families can consist of eight, 10 or even 12 children. All these pressures culminate in migration. Every Muslim family from Lunawada has at least one member in the Gulf. In contrast the Hindus—who have traditionally been landowners in Lunawada—have sent barely a hundred migrants.

Babubhai Rana is one of them. "I used to earn Rs85 ($3.50) a month as a teacher in 1975," he explains. "If I had stayed here I would now be getting maybe Rs500 ($20) or Rs1,000 ($40) each month. That is not enough." Rana gave up his position as a language teacher to start off as a labourer in the Gulf. By the late 1980s, he was a clerk in Kuwait, earning $400 a month.

In many respects, India is a good example of the many countries experiencing dramatic migrations of their populations as a result of economic stagnation, environmental degradation and civil unrest. An estimated 45 to 50 million people become international migrants, legally or illegally, voluntarily or involuntarily, each year.

Current movements of people around the globe are growing, says James Purcell, director-general of the International Organization for Migration, creating problems for the international community. While the Gulf states still need migrant labour, some 17 million refugees that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is protecting around the world are rarely welcome arrivals.

About half the Indian migrants in Kuwait are in unskilled jobs—housemaids and labourers—with monthly earnings of around $120. Some are semi-skilled workers such as carpenters and masons who earn more, say $250. White-collar workers make up only about 15 per cent of migrants and even rarer are professionals such as doctors and engineers, who can command monthly salaries of $2,000.

Rana is one of the few migrants to have invested his Gulf savings productively. He bought a spare parts shop in Lunawada that is now his only source of income. Forced home by the war, he is in no hurry to return to the Gulf. "There it was a machine life," he says. He would rather earn less and live with his family.

But for most of the 2,500 others forced back from Kuwait, coming home has been little short of a disaster. "They left behind their salary, service benefits and household items," explains Abul ala a Qashmi, head of the hastily formed Kuwait Returnees Association. "They came back with nothing." Most are now selling gold ornaments and family heirlooms to stay financially afloat. A few have set up vegetable and fruit stalls or taken to tailoring.

Many of those who do return feel trapped in a twilight zone: on the one hand they resent living as outsiders in the Gulf states, where they cannot become citizens, buy land or set up businesses of their own. On the other, they cannot stay at home. About 100 of Lunawada's returnees have already gone back to Kuwait; the others wait for the visa they see as a lifeline to a better tomorrow.

IPPF/People Features

McNamara: Slow population growth to avert disaster

Without a massive global effort to finance family-planning programmes during the 1990s, population growth will continue to destroy the environment and reverse much of the development gains made in recent decades, according to Robert McNamara, former head of the World Bank.

Voicing concerns of many at the World Bank and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), McNamara has proposed a programme whereby each developing country would set targets for its population stabilization and a birth control campaign costing about $8 billion each year by the year 2000.

Addressing the United Nations on 10 December, McNamara said, "Within the past decade, four global environmental phenomena have surfaced: loss of biodiversity, acid rain, destruction of the ozone layer and climate change. All are a function of rising population and increasing consumption *per capita*."

He cited higher population projections by the World Bank that put the eventual size of world population at 12.4 billion and, barring dramatically stepped-up programmes, possibly 14 billion (compared to the current 5.3 billion) by the year 2085.

The most important factors regarding the impact on the environment, he argues, will be the size of population and consumption *per capita*. Even if *per capita* consumption were to grow at only 2 per cent a year, "it would double in 35 years, quadruple in 70 years and by the end of the next century would be eight times greater than today," given these population projections.

An eightfold increase in consumption *per capita*, he estimates, would mean a 20 times greater global production with devastating impact on non-renewable and renewable resources.

The dilemma facing developing countries in particular is that they must raise production *per capita* if they are to meet the demands of their people for a better life. There is no question that economic growth must continue if the quality of life is to improve. The problem then is one of excessive population.

While it is likely that technological advances "can and will" drastically reduce environmental damage per unit of production, he said, the impact of such huge population growth on basic resources and ecosystems is far more difficult to appraise. "We have no assurance that the globe can tolerate production increases of anything approaching the magnitude of these projections," he explained.

McNamara also called for discussion on how the developed contries, which consume seven times as much *per capita* as developing countries, could reduce their consumption patterns and help "assure a sustainable path to development for everyone".

Citing the positive impact of existing population programes and technologies, McNamara said that the main barrier to stabilizing population growth within tolerable levels is the lack of financial resources. He calculated that the international donor community could increase its funding from $800 million to approximately $3.5 billion by the year 2000, which is "less than two-hundredths of 1 per cent of the total GNP of OECD countries". Developing countries should increase their spending on family planning programmes from $3 billion to $4.5 billion.

"Given the severity of the enviromental and poverty problems facing the developing countries and the global community," McNamara argued, "reducing population growth rates is a necessary, humane and low-cost step that will contribute to their solution." ■

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Culture versus 'free trade'

By K. Ravi Srinivas

The controversy over the import of American films in Indonesia ("Movie import quotas provoke protests" *DF*, May-June 1991) is a good example of the issue of culture in serious conflict with international free trade. In the ongoing Uruguay Round of trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and

Cultural diversity is more important than free trade in audio-visual products.

Trade (GATT), it has proven to be as problematic for some Northern countries as those in the South.

Many governments are increasingly involved in the battle over their right to control the import of movies and television programming. The reasons for this are many, including the maintenance of public morality, the protection of national cultures and, not infrequently, the desire to control the dissemination of news and information.

Culture, mass media and entertainment can no longer be seen as separate spheres in the era of global multi-media conglomerates. Maxwell, Time-Warner, Sony, Bertelsmann and Turner Broadcasting are some of the emerging global media groups that are involved in disseminating cultural products, ranging from movies to magazines to satellite news broadcasts through their global networks. The issue at stake is much more than their size. What matters is their outreach and their impact on national cultures, big and small.

With deregulation and the emergence of a single European market in 1992, the media barons have extended their alliances around the globe. With the opening of East European markets, new territory is ready to be conquered. Indeed, the future may hold a world without borders.

Developing countries can protect their geographical boundaries, but to protect themselves from the reach of such networks is not easy. The elimination of regulatory powers for governments will result in massive cultural invasion, especially in developing countries like India.

National and regional cultures will have to bear this onslaught from heavily marketed cultural products, particularly from the United States and Japan.

The United States film industry has been lobbying for a framework in services to facilitate their exports. In the first meeting of the GATT's working group on audio-visual products, held in Geneva at the end of August 1990, there were conflicting views on free trade in audio-visual products.

The proponents of free trade were Japan and the United States. Opponents included the European Community (EC) as well as many developing nations.

The United States and Japan have objected to any exception to free trade in audio-visual products on the grounds of "cultural protection", "national security", "health", "public morals", etc.

Earlier, in 1989, a dispute erupted between the United States and European Community over the regulation of imports of television programmes. The Community issued a preliminary directive designed to promote and encourage local programming by reserving half of all television programming for European productions.

© Beryl Goldberg

Does a nation *have the right to defend its culture and diversity? Movie fare in Montevideo, Uruguay.*

The American TV producers opposed this move as it would result in the loss of lucrative syndication business. This is understandable as entertainment has become the second biggest net export item from the United States after aerospace, amounting to $8 billion in 1990.

Carla Hills, the United States trade representative, argued against the European regulation, saying it "was particularly reprehensible because it involved the area of thought and free expression, which Americans hold dear."

This assertion angered many in the Community. Alain Le Diberder, a French culture ministry official, said "We simply don't speak the same language. She talks about goods, we talk about culture." Still, the EC took note of the protest of the United States and the proposed TV regulations were reduced to the level of recommendations only.

The hardline position of the United States and Japan has been opposed by many countries including India, Switzerland and Austria. They argue that nations do have the sovereign right to protect the culture of their people. Countries like India and Egypt, which enjoy a flourishing export trade in audio-visual products, still favour a cultural exception clause in any GATT agreement.

Japan has expressed the view that as GATT had no cultural exception clause, there is no need for one now. Many countries refuse to accept this line of argument by pointing out the qualitative differences between services and goods. Further debate is expected on the issue at the stalled talks.

If the demand by the United States and Japan is accepted, it will result in massive expansion in trade of audio-visual products over which national governments and societies will have little control. If cultural diversity is lost and national cultures are marginalized on account of homogenization of culture, the loss will be irreplaceable. Only media barons and global media networks can be happy about this. ■

K. Ravi Srinivas works with the Friends Network, a Madurai-based (Tamil Nadu, India) NGO, which studies the impact of biotechnology, environment and development issues, and the implications of the GATT talks.

Paths to private sector support

By Carlos Brezina

In their debate over how to support the private sector (see "Development banks pushed towards private sector" by Judith Evans, *DF* July/August 1991), the multilateral agencies that finance development in

The blurring distinction between the public and the private sectors is opening up new opportunities for multilateral agencies.

Latin America and the Caribbean find themselves, to paraphrase Jorge Luis Borges, in a garden of forked paths.

The World Bank and, in Latin America, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) both support the privatization of public firms and the expansion of the private sector in developing countries. Financing for this purpose is channelled through governmental intermediaries. Both agencies have affiliates that lend to, and invest in, private companies: IDB's Inter-American Investment Corporation and the World Bank's International Finance Corporation.

The Asian Development Bank lends directly to the private sector. The African Development Bank is studying whether or not it should do so. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created earlier this year specifically to support the private sector of the Central and Eastern European countries that have begun implementing market reforms to replace directed economies.

The World Bank's statutes prohibit that institution from lending directly to the private sector. IDB can lend to the private sector but as a matter of policy requires that the government guarantee the loan. But since the debt crisis, IDB has approved only one loan to a private firm.

Two basic positions

Representatives from a number of member countries have asked that both institutions undertake direct private-sector lending, thus setting off a vigorous debate. The discussion basically comes down to two positions, as IDB president Enrique V. Iglesias noted following the IDB annual meeting in Nagoya, Japan, in April. One is for IDB to support the private sector indirectly,

The human freedom index: A developing country critique

By Chandra Muzaffar

Earlier this year, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) outlined its new policy that gives unprecedented attention to the role of human development in the formulation and measure of economic and social development

UNDP is backing away from using the index—with good reason.

efforts. In its annual *Human Development Report 1991* (see *DF* July/August), it says clearly, "Men, women and children must be the centre of attraction—with development woven around people, not people around development."

Using human development as its yardstick, the UNDP report produced some very useful data on public expenditure on human development in both the North and the South. It makes telling points about budgetary allocations for education, health care and sanitation compared to money spent on the purchase of military hardware in a number of countries.

While there are these positive elements, the report is seriously flawed by the introduction of the so-called "human freedom index", a measure that UNDP has since decided not to use—with good reason. The index, originally formulated by Charles Humana, a British academic, contains "40 distinct criteria for judging freedom", most of them drawn from documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The criteria include the right to associate and assemble peacefully, the right to practise any religion, independent courts, independent radio and television networks, freedom from unlawful detention, freedom from torture or coercion and so on.

Clearly, these are acceptable to most people. However, there are several criteria and conceptual biases which would be rejected outright as measures of human freedom in many parts of the world. The index is also marred by the absence of certain crucial freedoms, which weakens its authority. It has ignored freedom from hunger, freedom from disease, freedom from illiteracy and other such freedoms.

It would have been all right to exclude these freedoms if the index was a straightforward political freedom index. But it is not. The report boldly asserts that, "Humana's index is thus more than a political freedom index, more than a human rights index. It is a **human freedom index**."

How can a human freedom index ignore freedoms—such as freedom from hunger—which are fundamental to the very survival of the human being? And shouldn't such freedoms be given much more weight than, say, the right to travel abroad, which is one of the 40 indicators used in the report?

If freedom from hunger was one of the indicators wouldn't China, which is placed 84 out of 88 countries, rank much higher in the index? How would one measure the stupendous achievement of freeing one billion human beings from hunger?

There is an even more serious shortcoming in UNDP's human freedom index. It appears that it has given very little weight to the freedom of a people, the freedom of a nation. It is this freedom which millions and millions of people in Asia and Africa struggled for during the long decades of colonial oppression.

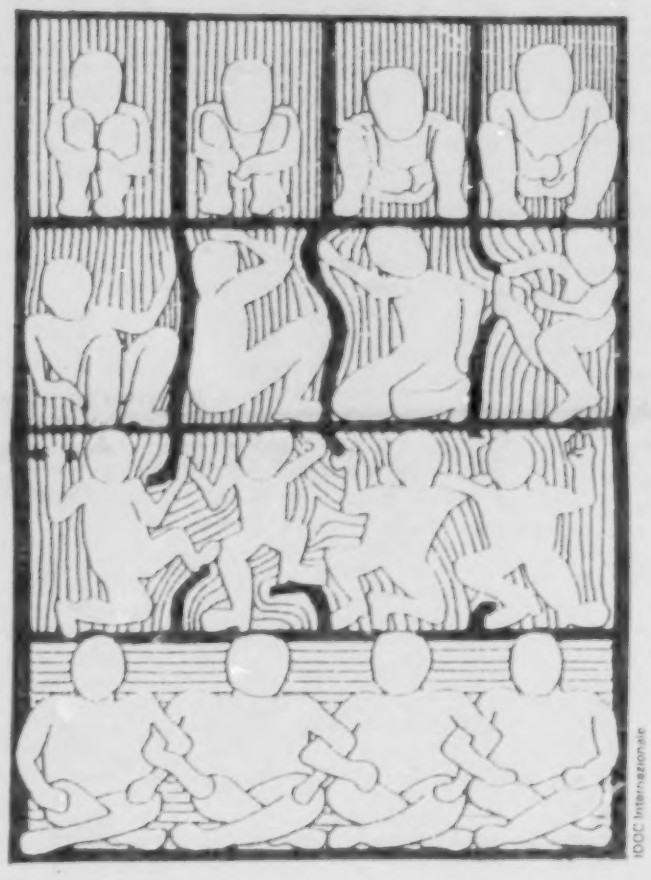
If the index attached some importance to this concept of collective freedom, it would not have placed Hong Kong, a British colony, in the 26th slot, well ahead of 62 independent nation-states, including countries like Brazil (no.35), Bolivia (no.36), Thailand (no.41), India (no.42), Egypt (no.49) and Malaysia (no.55). That the people of Hong Kong enjoy a number of personal liberties does not in any way alter the fact that the state is still not free.

One can argue that if the freedom, the independence of a whole nation, of an entire state, was given the significance it deserves, some attempt would have been made to measure the political freedom, the economic independence, the cultural autonomy of nation-states in the post-colonial era. How much real political freedom do most states today enjoy in the international arena?

For the freedom that a state enjoys in the international arena has a direct bearing upon the individual citizen's ability to shape the political future of his society. There is no point in advocating "more participatory" development if the options available to a people to develop are severely limited by an international system dominated by a few powerful actors.

The index's neglect of the collective freedom of a people and its relationship to individual human liberties is most apparent in its evaluation of Israel. Israel, in spite of its policy towards the Palestinian people who are collectively denied many rights granted other citizens, is ranked 34, above a number of other countries with less tarnished records.

When we reflect upon all these flaws in the human freedom index, it becomes clear that it contains stark biases.



IDOC Internazionale

First, it has a Western cultural bias as evinced by its inclusion of a freedom such as "homosexuality between consulting adults" which does not have universal acceptability. Indeed, in many non-Western societies, strong religious and cultural traditions would deny any legitimacy to such a practice.

The index has given very little weight to the freedom of a people, the freedom of a nation.

Second, it is biased towards political and civil liberties even though it claims to be "more than a political freedom index". By implication, it is biased against economic and social rights such as the right to food, shelter, employment, education and health.

This bias towards political and civil liberties is, in fact, characteristic of most Western human rights groups. It reflects the genesis of post-18th century human rights struggles in Europe which were rooted in attempts by an emerging middle class to establish its political and civil rights vis-à-vis the state.

In the non-Western world, on the other hand, particularly the impoverished nations of the South, it is not possible to even conceive of human freedom without emphasizing the importance of freeing the human being from the clutches of hunger and disease.

This does not mean—it must be stressed—that political and civil rights are any less important in the South. What our situation demands is a truly holistic conception of human rights and responsibilities.

UNDP's human freedom index is also biased towards individual freedoms and personal rights. Here the influence of the Western historical experience is only too evident. From the 16th century onwards, the defence of individual rights and personal freedoms against the strictures of religion and community became a cardinal concern of the European intelligentsia.

In Asia and Africa, on the other hand, the great historical challenge confronting the intelligentsia was not freeing the individual from the dominance of *church and state* but liberating whole communities and entire societies from Western colonial rule. As a result, the collective freedom of people assumed a significance in these continents which has no parallel in the history of Europe. It has remained a vital component of human freedom partly because of the continuing dominance of Western civilization. The human freedom index shows very little appreciation of these widely divergent historical realities.

The biases and slants in the index provoke us to ask whether it is worthwhile to continue with the human freedom index. It is pertinent to raise this question since the UNDP report itself recognizes that measuring freedom is still at a very preliminary stage. The report is aware of the inadequacies of the index.

Instead of constructing an index, it may be more useful to draw up analytical profiles of human freedom in each country. These profiles should be prepared by individuals or groups with a profound knowledge of human freedom in their respective societies. Country profiles produced in this manner will provide us with deep insights into the relationship between human freedom and human development. Such insights will not emerge from an index on human freedom. ■

Chandra Muzaffar, Ph.D., is a Malaysian political scientist and president of Aliran, a Malaysian non-governmental organization.

by obtaining government guarantees and working through official agencies.

Alternatively, IDB could make direct loans to the private sector, with the Bank and the Inter-American Investment Corporation taking a catalytic role in raising financing for large projects and megaprojects. Such an approach would distribute risks among several lenders.

Representatives of both the private and public sectors of Latin America and the Caribbean emphasize the challenges facing multilateral banks in spurring private-sector development.

Some government officials point out that it is contradictory to encourage the privatization of public agencies that received financing from multilateral agencies when they were controlled by the state, but now that they are in private hands to no longer allow them access to this financing source.

It has been noted that Chile has advanced further in privatization than other Latin American countries and its private sector finds itself up against a major limitation: the absence of local banks large enough to finance massive investment projects. The multilateral agencies must fill this role.

The inability of IDB and the World Bank to respond to the new reality in Latin America "can be a disincentive for other countries to start on the road to privatization," warned Pablo Piñera, Chile's deputy secretary of finance. ■

Carlos Brezina is a writer for The IDB, *a newsletter of the Inter-American Development Bank.*

Combating the scourge of *panelitis conferentis*

By Erskine Childers

In the last couple of decades "participants" at many non-governmental organization (NGO) meetings have become increasingly listless, slumping in their chairs, many even dozing off. While "presenters" are speaking from the rostrum, a nervous twitch has been detected among the audience: some listeners hesitantly half-raise hands as if to ask a question, then drop them in resignation. When the moderator thanks the last of all the "presenters" and says, "Now we have only a few minutes left but we *do* want *your* questions or comments . . .," there may even be an audible growl in the room. A strange, debilitating disease is clearly afflicting the rarefied world of NGOs.

Panelitis is so insidious a disease that only disciplined preventive measures can block its pandemic penetration into the last as yet uninfected NGO meeting.

This mysterious condition seems to have originated in North America, probably a pernicious side-effect of a lethal weapon called "The Panel". Finding no medical term for it, I therefore named it *panelitis conferentis* and have been tracking its increasing virulence—especially at conferences—ever since.

The onset of *panelitis* usually takes place at the first meeting to plan a seminar or conference, when someone says that, of course, "Both sides of the issue will have to be presented." This is agreed: there will be two "panelists". The worthy Dr. Omnisciens is then chosen as moderator, and someone says, "But of course he'll want to say a few words." There will now be *three* speakers (after the presiding officer . . .).

The following week someone telephones a colleague:

"You know, I've been thinking. You realize that if we have Anand as a Panelist with Belinda, *Chaiko* is going to be quite furious . . .?"

"You're absolutely right . . .we must invite him."

Chalk up *five* speakers. "Participation time" is now actively threatened by the disease. The presiding officer and the moderator are to take "only five minutes each"; they will actually consume 15 between them. Each Panelist is to speak for "not more than 15 minutes"; two will go for 20, and one for 25 . . .

Some days later, the disease advances during another phone conversation:

"Professor Lachrymosis says we can't *possibly* address that subject and neglect Factor X, but none of the Panelists is competent to cover that. He suggested Dr. Dravovic."

"But all the Panelists have already accepted . . . Well, invite him; but everyone will *have to* be brief . . ."

There will now be *four* panelists *plus* a moderator and a presiding officer. But even as the meeting begins the disease may suddenly intensify. The presiding officer:

"Friends, colleagues, before Dr. Omnisciens introduces our subject I am *delighted* to welcome an unexpected guest, none other than director-general Suavis. I'm sure we would *all* wish him to say just a *few* words . . ."

Thus have countless meetings across the world, in untold numbers of NGOs, ended up seriously frustrating their audiences—with the best of intentions. Paradoxically, the more effective the "presentations" have been, the *more* likely that members of the audience will have wanted to join in—but with less time left to do so. Yet again, the more complex the many presentations have been, the more questions people in the audience will have wanted to ask—but couldn't when they wanted to, have usually forgotten by the time the last presenter has finished, and then in any case can't—because the moderator is embarrassedly saying "I'm afraid we've run out of time."

Panelitis is so insidious a disease that only disciplined preventive measures can block its pandemic penetration into the last as yet uninfected NGO meeting. A few such protective measures can be suggested:

1. Every meeting is a *communication process* of some kind. The process is a function of topic, participants, and format. *Spend time analysing these factors.*

Organizing a good panel requires clarity about the topic, format, and who will participate.

—Try to predict who is likely to attend, with what knowledge of the topic, and what expectations of such a venue. For example, if you want to provide a "briefing", will the audience be willing only to "receive"? (Very doubtful.)

—Do the topic and the audience indicate a presentation by one authority and then discussion—possibly with one (brief) "respondent" to get the discussion going? *Respect the participants*: they will "round out" the topic.

—If it really is a "both sides" topic then *call it a debate.* Strictly limit each speaker's time, and enable the audience also to debate!

—If it's not a matter of "both sides", but of different facets of a broad topic area, *don't try to cover the entire universe with Panelists*—such good intentions will only result in an exhausted, word-battered audience. Let the *audience* discussion bring out the rest; choose a moderator who knows how to "assemble" all contributions (briefly!).

—If you absolutely *must* have more than two panelists, at least reduce the risk of "audience slump" by having five minutes of questions *after each* presentation.

—Always choose moderators who will be firm with timing, and will declare this at the opening of the meeting. (Send a written reminder about tight timing to each presenter, with the polite warning that they will simply be cut off.)

—Just don't *allow* "VIPs" to overwhelm meetings. And "past officers" should not expect—or be granted—special speaking time. They have had enough limelight already.

2. *Decide all this before issuing invitations to speakers* (and co-sponsors). Organizers often get themselves deeper and deeper into overloaded rostrums and conference workshop schedules because invitations have gone out before the implications had been fully considered. Another symptomatic phone conversation:

"Do you realize that professor Oxymoron has now *accepted*? That means six Panelists in Workshop 5!"

"Could we put him on the panel in Workshop 4?"

"I doubt it; the Alternative Energy people are *paying* to have that workshop, and *their* panelists in it."

"Well, everyone will just have to be brief . . ."

(Another sure symptom of the disease is a workshop where there are almost as many panelists as there are "participators".)

3. *Carefully communicate the nature of a meeting to those likely to come.* Organizers need to be very conscious of what *they* want to gain from a meeting, and what *those who attend* may want to gain. The two are not by *any* means always identical.

—Take the trouble to *explain the purpose in the advance announcement.* For example: "Mainly of benefit to . . ."

—In conferences dividing into workshops, in the first plenary session *explain the purpose and format of each workshop.* This will save much frustration for participants.

—When planning workshops, for any major issue carefully consider the idea of a first *briefing* session (so announced), and a *second* session on the same topic, for "general discussion". Better two sessions on one topic with genuine participation by the end, than trying to cover two topics without adequate discussion on either!

—*Be flexible.* If you see that rather different people have come to a meeting than you expected, don't necessarily proceed blindly with the planned format, which may not be suitable for that audience. *Warn Panelists that you may change the proceedings, and don't let them intimidate you!*

If these guidelines are followed, it may still be possible to arrest the spread of *panelitis*, and thus preserve democratic NGO dialogue on Planet Earth.

Time, however, is running out—just as it does, so often, for the (always-intended) "participators"

Erskine Childers, co-author with Brian Urquhart of A World in Need of Leadership: Tomorrow's United Nations *(Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, Uppsala, Sweden), is a 22-year veteran of the United Nations system and a sought-after panelist.*

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Co-operatives

The **Silver Creek Citrus Farmers Group** was formed in January 1990 by a small group of Mayan Kekichi Indians in the Silver Creek village in Belize to generate economic resources for the families of the community.

The leaders of the co-operative decided to grow citrus plants because they believed that there would be a demand for citrus in Belize. They discovered, however, that more work was required than they had planned. Even though they are hard-working people, the Kekichi Indians did not own tools such as machetes, spades, shovels, digging sticks, pans, etc.

Help came from a graduate of the Leadership Center of the Americas (*see entry below*), based in the United States. Through his assistance and that of other graduates from Belize, the co-operative was finally started, receiving advice on fundraising and technical support from the Center.

For more information, contact Heraldo Flowers, Pride Belize, 56 Barrack Road, Belize City, Belize. Tel. 501-2-32131; Fax 501-2-31825.

Latin America/ Caribbean

The goals of the **Leadership Center of the Americas** (LCA) are to train Latin American and Caribbean students in the principles of democratic government; to teach skills for development through democracy; and to forge links of friendship and communication between the United States and the Latin American/Caribbean regions. The Center is funded and monitored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and corporate sponsors.

The Center offers training in three seminars each year—in December/January, August and May. They feature a variety of lectures, discussion groups, workshops, role-playing, and intercultural exchange activities. Since its inception, the Center has trained over 750 Latin American and Caribbean students representing 27 countries.

Graduates of the seminars become members of the **Pan American Network** (PAN), the LCA alumni organization, whose goal is to form a network of Latin American/Caribbean/United States leaders dedicated to working together to improve the economic and social conditions in the hemisphere. LCA maintains an extensive databank for PAN members. The organization annually publishes a directory and distributes periodic newsletters.

For additional information and applications, contact the Leadership Center of the Americas, 500 Laurel Street, Suite 400, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801, United States. Tel. (504) 344-8066; Fax (504) 336-0420.

Cross Over is a monthly newsletter available free from CARIMAC, a Caribbean non-governmental organization. As its name indicates, it aims to serve as a bridge and meeting point with news on workshops, publications, networks and NGOs in the region.

The overriding theme of rich and varied information contained in the newsletter's limited number of pages is development education. One of its great merits is its compact and immediate presentation of sundry news items on a wide range of specific topics directed towards the education sector—a useful tool for those seeking to establish direct contact with the Caribbean situation from a genuinely participatory and grassroots perspective.

Distributed by CARIMAC, UWI, Mona Campus, Kingston 7, Jamaica.

Human settlements

The United Kingdom-based Building and Social Housing Foundation is organizing an international study visit in the Philippines from 4 to 9 May 1992. Its purpose is to bring delegates from around the world to study and share the experience of the Core Shelter Project—16,000 **typhoon-resistant homes** for low-income families. These homes are easily constructed using local materials and self-help and are capable of withstanding typhoons of up to 180 kph. Previously these people's houses had been destroyed annually by typhoons.

With the provision of a permanent dwelling, families have the time, resources and incentive to undertake income-generating projects and vegetable and herb gardening.

Intensive site visits will form a major part of the study visit, providing an opportunity not only to see the houses but to talk to the people who live in them and the technical personnel who advise and train the builders.

It is probable that bursaries will be made available by the British government through the Overseas Development Administration to help meet the costs of representatives of developing countries who wish to participate in this study visit.

For application forms and further details, contact Diane Diacon, Building and Social Housing Foundation, Memorial Square, Coalville, Leicestershire LE6 4EU, United Kingdom.

Development

Rural Development: An Annotated Bibliography of ILO Publications and Documents, 1983-1990.
Compiled by Evelyn Schaad.
ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211, Geneva 22, Switzerland.

The purpose of this bibliography is to bring together ILO publications and documents on strategies that have been proposed or adopted for generating rural development. The focus is on trends of rural development and on policies and programmes designed to promote employment opportunities as well as other measures for alleviating rural poverty.

Its seven sections cover books that have been published by ILO itself; ILO books published by commercial publishers; research and working papers prepared by the technical programmes of ILO; conference papers and reports; articles published in ILO and other journals; reports from technical co-operations projects; and other publications.

Projects with People: The Practice of Participation in Rural Development.
Peter Oakley, et al.
ILO Publications Center, 49 Sheridan Ave., Albany, NY 12210, United States. $26.00 + shipping and handling: $3.00 for first book and $0.50 for each additional book.

Case studies from Africa, Asia and Latin America illustrate a wide range of experiences in which attempts are made to promote participation by the people within the broad framework of development projects. Highlighting the successes and failures of various approaches used in diverse settings, this book offers insight into what steps and instruments are needed to effect participation.

Calendar

21-27 June 1992
Third International Conference on Ethics and Development, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
Call for papers.

"The Ethics of Ecodevelopment: Culture, the Environment, and Dependency" is the theme for this conference sponsored by the International Development Ethics Association (IDEA). IDEA is a cross-cultural, multidisciplinary group of philosophers, as well as development theorists, policy makers and representatives of grassroots groups who apply ethical reflection to development goals and strategies and to relations between rich and poor countries.

The conference aims to promote a fruitful convergence of international development ethics and environmental ethics, to forge an ethic of ecodevelopment that takes into account cultural, environmental and economic values and constraints, and to influence the formation and implementation of ethical policies and practices concerning development and the environment.

For further information about IDEA and the conference, contact David A. Crocker, IDEA, Department of Philosophy, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 80523, United States. Tel. (303) 484-5764; Fax (303) 491-0528.

Rainforests

Living Earth Rainforests Resource Pack.

The resource pack, produced by the London-based environmental group Living Earth, is designed to seek positive solutions to the problems facing tropical rainforests. It explores the complex issues associated with the destruction and conservation of tropical rainforests.

The pack, aimed at both primary and secondary school levels, contains four large full-colour posters, teacher's notes to accompany charts, briefing documents, action cards for pupils, two copies of *Paradise Lost?* (a lavish handbook on tropical rainforests and their management) and a reading and resource list.

Each pack costs $40.00. To order, write to Publications, Cultural Survival, 53A Church St., Cambridge, MA 02138, United States.

Whose Trees? A People's View of Forestry Aid.
Nicholas Atampugre, Ed.
Panos Publications Ltd., 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD, United Kingdom. £7.95.

This report consists of three Finnish-funded forestry projects in Sudan, Nepal and Tanzania carried out by a team of nationals of each country concerned—a journalist, a forestry expert and an NGO representative working on the environment. The reports were written to encourage debate and discussion of the issues in both the North and the South. Each study highlights the problems that aid donors face in trying to put into practice the principles of sustainable development.

Conservation

Debt-for-Nature Exchanges and Biosphere Reserves: Experiences and Potential.
Peter Dogsé and Bernd von Droste.
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.

This paper is Digest 6 in UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Digest Series. It starts with an explanation of the debt-for-nature concept, followed by a more detailed evaluation of exchanges performed in connection with biosphere reserves, drawn principlally on three examples from Latin America (Bolivia, Costa Rica and Ecuador). Guidelines are presented regarding how experiences gained from these agreements could be incorporated into future debt exchanges. Political, economic and institutional factors and changes influencing the potential for debt-for-nature ventures in different regions of the world are also examined.

Fight for the Forest: Chico Mendes in His Own Words, published by Latin America Bureau (Research and Action) Ltd.

Courses

September-October 1992 Rural Development Course, University College of Wales, Wales, United Kingdom.

This eight-week course aims to give guidance to men and women involved in the day-to-day running of rural development programmes in the developing world. It concentrates on the particular problems of each participant, bringing in specialists in the fields of agriculture, education, health and management.

Students are not required to fulfil any specific academic qualifications other than the ability to benefit from and contribute to a course conducted in English. Applications are invited from project workers backed by an accredited organizations.

Course brochure and application forms may be obtained from Richard Hartnup, Rural Development Course, Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies, 9 Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, Wales SY23 2AZ, United Kingdom.

Environment

Global Sustainability: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography.
Robert W. Merideth, Jr. and Lauri S.Z. Greenberg.
Institute for Environmental Studies, Office of Publications, Information and Outreach, 550 N. Park St., 15 Science Hall, Madison, WI 53706, United States. $3.00.

This guide to recent literature on global sustainability—the long-term ability of the Earth's resources to withstand the pressures of consumptive human activities—offers brief descriptions of more than 150 books and reports published in the 1970s and the 1980s and more than 20 current journals and magazines.

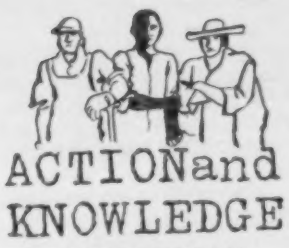
Entries for books and reports are organized into 10 categories: energy, biological conservation, agriculture, human impacts on the environment, inventories and status of global resources, progress toward sustainability, emerging global perspectives, tools and techniques for sustainable management, case studies and regional efforts in sustainability, and economics and the environment.

Refugees

Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers.
Judit Horvath-Lindberg and Diana Miserez.
League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Box 372, Geneva, Switzerland.

A handbook for Red Cross/Red Crescent staff and volunteers explains both the needs of asylum seekers and refugees as well as the means by which assistance can be provided.

The authors have worked in the refugee field for many years, one with a government service and the Swedish Red Cross, the other in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with the League. Although the book was written for Red Cross and Red Crescent practitioners in the field of work with refugees and asylum seekers, it will have great value for all those concerned with refugee issues.



DevEd

Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action-Research.
Orlando Fals-Borda and Muhammad Anisur Rahman, Eds.
The Apex Press, Suite 3C, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, United States. $16.50.

Participatory action-research (PAR) is an innovative approach to economic and social change which goes beyond the usual institutional boundaries in development by actively involving the people in generating knowledge about their own condition and how it can be changed. PAR has its origins in the work done by Third World social scientists two decades ago as they brought new ways to empower the oppressed by helping them to acquire reliable knowledge on which to construct countervailing power. It has since spread throughout the world, as reflected in this book with contributions from Asia, Africa, Latin America and North America in the form of case studies of actual experience with the PAR approach.

Health

The Provision and Use of Drugs in Developing Countries.
Anita Hardon, et al.
Health Action International Europe, J. van Lennepkade 334T, 1053 NJ Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Dfl.32.50 + 10 per cent handling.

This is a review and annotated bibliography of over 200 studies on the use and prescription of drugs in developing countries. It focuses on self-medication, prescribing practices and local distribution of drugs.

Many of the studies show that prescription-only drugs are often available over the counter in developing countries. They also describe problems such as over-prescribing and dependence on drugs in self-care for common illnesses such as diarrhoea and respiratory infections for which there are simple—and more effective—home remedies.

This bibliography has been compiled to bridge the gap between drug-use researchers and policy makers. It includes a section on research methods for health workers, policy makers or consumers who wish to carry out their own research. Conclusions with direct implications for policy are stressed in the abstracts.

Libraries

Third World Libraries.
Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Rosary College, 7900 West Division St., River Forest, Illinois 60305, United States. Free for libraries and library schools in the Third World.

This new journal of research and reflection on librarianship in developing countries focuses on the impact of library and information activities on socio-economic conditions. It aims to help the library and information professions in developing countries to take a visible and meaningful role in the achievement of national goals. The bi-annual journal is intended to serve as a medium of communication for developing-country professionals, as well as a source of ideas from the industrialized countries.

Food/agriculture

The Food Question: Profits Versus People?
Henry Bernstein, Ben Crow, Maureen Mackintosh, Charlotte Martin, Eds.
Monthly Review Press, 122 West 27th Street, New York, NY 10001, United States. $15.00.

The food question is a very large one, and while the book covers only a fraction of the relevant issues, it does contain analyses of many different levels of the political economy of food. Chapters examine problems of access to food in the city and the countryside; changes in production relations in food farming, especially the connections between small peasant farmers and large multinational firms and agencies; how markets work and their effects on local, national and international levels; and the "development" strategies, in relation to food, of the large agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The central concern is who gets to eat what—and, especially, why?

Credit

Financial Management of Micro-Credit Programs: A Guidebook for NGOs.
Robert Peck Christen.
ACCION International, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge MA 02139, United States. $19.00 (English), $15.00 (Spanish). Shipping and handling: $2.50 for first book, $0.50 for each additional book.

This hands-on guide to the financial management of micro-enterprise credit programmes is aimed at executive directors, financial and accounting officers, and other managers directly involved with the implementation of such programmes.

Small business

Opening the Marketplace to Small Enterprise: Where Magic Ends and Development Begins.
Ton de Wilde, Stijnte Schreurs and Arleen Richmond.
Intermediate Technology Publications, Ltd., 103-105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, United Kingdom. £12.95.

Here are proven innovative answers to the social, political and governmental obstacles facing small enterprise in developing countries. Read the stories of entrepreneurs who—through innovations in appropriate technology—created their own economic foundations, produced surplus goods, and moved their products into previously closed markets. The book addresses three fundamental issues: how to find financial support, how to improve products, and how to access markets.

Export Marketing for a Small Handicraft Business.
Edward Millard.
Intermediate Technology Publications, Ltd., 103-105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, United Kingdom. £7.95.

Most handicraft production units are small-scale and lack sufficient marketing experience or support structures. Often they do not have adequate management, manufacturing adaptability, and access to information or financial strength—factors which tend to be assumed in conventional texts about export marketing.

With emphasis on how to reach and respond effectively to the overseas customer, the book has something for both the novice and the experienced exporter. With general details of international trade procedures, it is of particular use for training purposes when backed up by country-specific information.

Reviews

Third World Resources: A Quarterly Review of Resources from and about the Third World.
Third World Resources, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612-2297, United States.

This quarterly review provides annotated lists of organizations, books, periodicals, pamphlets and audiovisuals on Third World regions and on issues such as human rights, women, labour, the environment, weapons sales, nuclear energy, and world hunger. Each issue contains a four-page centrefold guide with comprehensive listings on one Third World region.

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Sex, tourism and development

Dear Editor,

The article by Mallika Waningasundara ("Beach boys at risk", *DF*, September-October) makes painful reading. As one who has done some research on tourism in my country, I can corroborate the desperate cry of the beach boy: "How do we know we will be alive tomorrow? Let's enjoy ourselves in the time that is left."

Poverty, destitution and unemployment compel people—young and old, men and women, and even children—to seek out well-heeled tourists for a few dollars, pounds, yen or marks. Without self-respect, many of them cater to tourists who come with sex on their minds.

It is a tragedy that the quest for scarce foreign exchange has pushed many poor nations into acquiring a high-consumption lifestyle modeled after the West's. It is a self-defeating mirage, in terms of environmental damage, cultural erosion and social breakdown. And until the ruling elites, backed by powerful, sensitive public opinion, is seized of the problem, nothing can be done, not even incremental progress.

John Alexander,
Red Building, Tailors Lane, Chawni, Nagpur 440013 (MS), India.

World Council of Churches/Peter Williams

***A "hospitality girl"** in Olongapo City, Philippines.*

Sought-after technologies

Dear Editor,

We were delighted with the article "Minute rice outpaces drought" by Mahesh Uniyal (*DF*, September-October) which contained valuable information for us, the peoples of the Sahel. The development of a variety of rice which needs only three days of rain and can be harvested in 65 can only be a miracle for food self-sufficiency in our region.

We are contacting the researchers at IARI, and hope to obtain sample seeds for different ecological zones in Mali, particularly the arid ones.

We would like more information, however, about Unibrick Clu 2000 ("Termite-inspired success story" by Cameron Duodu, described in the same issue) to promote using local materials in building construction. In general, it would be helpful if *DF* could supply relevant addresses for certain articles likely to spark wide interest in your readership.

Youssouf Sanogo,
secretary, Groupe de recherches et d'applications techniques (GRAT), P.O. 2502, Bamako, Mali.

Tools for development

Dear Editor,

Your article on Africa's continuing economic woes ("Africa's recovery in jeopardy", *DF*, September-October) underlines a problem shared by other developing regions. Today, there is a huge shortage of hand tools available to mechanics, carpenters, builders, farmers, tailors, etc. Very expensive, they are almost "luxury" items, certainly beyond the reach of millions of unemployed youth.

We are struck by the fact that in development debates there is much talk about "the efficient development and utilization of human resources", but nobody asks how these people are to produce with bare hands.

This month, our organization will send out its quarter-millionth tool to help working people in Africa and Central America. The tools are reaching thousands of small workplaces to help process foodstuffs, turn out furniture and clothing, make and mend farm implements, repair vehicles. They do not require expensive foreign machinery or imported fuel.

Yet a million pounds' worth of simple tools could be used, day after day, by many thousands of people, on hundreds of thousands of productive jobs, for the next 20 years. That's cost-efficiency.

Hand tools are not a technology of the past. They are the most environmentally-friendly and empowering technology known to man, they are cost-effective, and they make a vital link between African needs of today and the new demands of the twenty-first century.

Glyn Roberts,
co-ordinator, Tools for Self Reliance, Netley Marsh, Southampton SO4 2GY, United Kingdom.

Attention all readers: A survey

If you have not already done so, please take five minutes to complete this reader survey and return to the address below. For your help, we will send you a complimentary 1991 United Nations map of the world. If there are multiple readers of your copy of *Development Forum (DF)*, please make a photocopy of the survey rather than clipping it from this copy and fill it out. Our readers have always been a valuable resource for the newspaper. If you know someone who should receive *DF*, complete item 16. The information you provide here will give us a better sense of what your needs are and how we can improve the publication. We will be updating our subscription lists on the basis of your response.

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As I assume my duties, I am well aware that our Organization faces the need for fundamental readjustments in response to a world in constant transformation. We must strive for the attainment of international development in all its aspects. It is my intention to address this issue with vigour in order to contribute to finding ways and means to narrow the gap between the rich North and the poor South. Tackling the crippling problem of international debt is central to achieving a healthy world economy. Equally important, issues of environment and sustainable development must be seriously addressed, so as to stop any further deterioration of our planet.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali
in accepting his appointment as new secretary-general of the United Nations for a five-year term beginning 1 January 1992.

un development forum

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World Intellectual Property Organization;
IFAD
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UNIDO
United Nations Industrial Development Organization;
IAEA
International Atomic Energy Agency;
GATT
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

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